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JUL 29

A QUESTION FOR CLARENCE THOMAS
See Page 148

EDITORIAL

BEWARE THE RECON MAN

U.S. economic sanctions against South Africa, which Congress passed in 1986 over President Reagan's veto and against Vice President Bush's fervent opposition, helped construct an international climate of pressure to end legislated apartheid in the world's most racist country. In that way, the sanctions "worked." To varying degrees, the five conditions Congress set for removal of the sanctions have now been met, but none of them fully, or in good faith. Most important, the Comprehensive Anti-Apartheid Act's stated purpose, which was "the establishment of a nonracial, democratic form of government," has in no way been achieved.

Still, President Bush is lifting the sanctions, not really to advance democratic government but in effect to stymie it. U.S. policy in "postapartheid" South Africa would reconstruct that society along the lines of the American South after the Civil War, with most blacks in a new kind of bondage, whites in effective economic control and a rising, conservative, superficially integrated middle class committed to preserving the unequal system. Above all, the Africanists in the Bush Administration want South Africa to stay firmly within the First World ambit, subject to as much U.S. influence as possible and with no chance of leading independent political blocs or economic cartels against the West.

To that end, Bush will do what he can to ignore, co-opt, split or, if necessary, destroy the African National Congress—the mainspring within South Africa of the sanctions program. The sanctions won international support in 1986 because of militant action in the townships there, but also because of a broad grass-roots movement here, led by black activists and college students. If Bush's plans for reconstructive engagement in South Africa are to be thwarted, all the forces that won sanctions in the first place will have to take action again.

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IN POPPY'S FOOTSTEPS

DAN QUAYLE, BUSINESS'S BACKDOOR BOY

JIM SIBBISON

When Dan Quayle was an Indiana senator, he was careful to sponsor special-interest legislation and other causes that kept the industrialists in his state contented. The response was a continuing flow of campaign contributions from pharmaceutical manufacturers, oil and gas interests and other corporations. Lester Gerig, a former president of Mutual Security Life Insurance Company in Fort Wayne, said about Quayle in *The Washington Post*, "The business community never had any representative that was more knowledgeable or did more for it."

As Vice President, Quayle is again conferring financial favors on industry, this time on a national scale and with a decision-making authority the Founding Fathers never anticipated. He derives his power from the chairmanship of an obscure government agency called the President's Council on Competitiveness. Quayle publicly defines his job as keeping the United States "number one in the global market," but privately he uses the post to communicate with secret contacts in industry and to order government agencies to weaken or toss out regulations that displease corporate executives.

In recent months, Quayle has been targeting the Environmental Protection Agency's new regulations to reduce the severe pollution that contaminates urban air from New York to Los Angeles. He already has forced revisions so extensive that, if allowed to stand, they could increase air pollution. The facts about the Quayle council have been brought out by the House Subcommittee on Health and the Environment,

(*Continued on Page 160*)

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LETTERS.

HOME TRUTHS ABOUT TORTURE

New York City

In early December a *Nation* fact checker called me regarding the accuracy of a statement by Aryeh Neier that "in the United States, torture in police custody has largely been eliminated over the past two decades." I said the statement was wrong, that an epidemic of police abuse amounting to torture was rampant in the United States, and I cited numerous examples. However, the statement appeared in Neier's "Watching Rights" column [Dec. 10] devoted to torture in India. Neier pointed out that torture is "entrenched" in democracies like India as well as in dictatorships. But according to Neier the United States is not one of those democracies; torture has been "largely eliminated" here because of the civil liberties movement.

I only wish Aryeh Neier were correct. Unfortunately, torture is employed on a daily basis in U.S. prisons and by police during arrests and interrogations. The severe beating of a motorist by police in Los Angeles should bring this home to all of us. Recently a New York City detective reported that his fellow detectives regularly beat drug suspects like "wild cowboys on a rampage." In August 1988 in New York's Tompkins Square Park police brutally beat dozens of people. In Miami, six police officers allegedly beat a drug suspect to death. In 1990 New York City agreed to pay $1 million to three men who were tortured by police with stun guns in a precinct in Queens known as the "stun-gun precinct." Stun-gun torture is common; similar incidents have been reported in Chicago, Detroit and Washington. There are thousands of these instances, including police murders, such as the killing of Michael Stewart in New York. The Justice Department now admits to receiving 15,000 allegations of police abuse in the past six years; some large cities record at least that many annually.

If we include the torture that occurs systematically in almost every U.S. prison—in a country that has more prisoners than any other—the number becomes astronomical. In one New York City jail, Rikers Island, there are vicious police beatings every year. August 1990 saw 140 inmates injured, eighty-one of them with head injuries and broken arms and fingers from clubbing when they were forced to run the gantlet as revenge for a prison takeover protesting inhuman conditions. Another 127 beatings were reported at Rikers that same year. In 1989 four Rikers guards beat an inmate until he fell to the ground, after which they kicked him into the hall. In 1987 manacled prisoners were clubbed while running a gantlet. This is only one jail; torture in prison goes on everywhere.

I believe Americans think otherwise for at least three reasons. Most of us abhor the police beatings, but we do not see them as torture. Yet the Torture Convention, recently signed and ratified by the United States, defines torture as "severe physical or mental pain" inflicted by a public official for such purposes as obtaining a confession, punishment or for any reason based on discrimination. President Bush's anticrime bill defines torture similarly.

In addition, we view torture as something done to political opponents of governments, such as Argentina or Chile, not those arrested for common crimes. Also, there may be an element of racism, a failure to take seriously abuse of blacks and other minorities by primarily white institutions, which could do something about torture. Finally, it is easier to point the finger at another country, particularly when many of us are invested in protecting the myth that America is a democracy with an exemplary human rights record.

We must understand that torture is common and entrenched in the United States, and we must call it by its name. *Michael Ratner*
Center for Constitutional Rights

NEIER REPLIES

New York City

First, I certainly do consider what happened to Rodney King in Los Angeles to be torture. And I think a number of the other incidents that Ratner cites warrant that label.

Second, a central point of my column was that torture is prevalent in democracies such as India, Brazil and Argentina (the latter two have been counted as democracies for several years now) and not only in military dictatorships.

Third, the Rodney King episode has helped to bring to public attention the continuing prevalence of a significant level of police brutality in the United States, and I readily concede that abuse revealed in the six months since I wrote the column is worse than I had believed. Yet it was far worse two decades ago, and I think the civil liberties and civil rights movements in the United States deserve credit for the changes that have taken place.

In the early 1960s, when I started work for the A.C.L.U., false confessions to crimes such as murder that were coerced by torture were commonplace. Supreme Court decisions such as *Escobedo* (1964) and *Miranda* (1966), and efforts by civil libertarians to seek compliance, made a real difference in curbing such practices. The current upsurge—or what appears to be an upsurge—in police abuse cases may be attributable, at least in part, to the Rehnquist Court's dreadful decisions, as exemplified by the recent forty-eight-hour detention-without-charge monstrosity.

As bad as police torture was in the 1960s and earlier, however, it is simply not in the same league with the "democracies" I was writing about. In India, where the crime rate is relatively low, hundreds die each year from the effects of torture in police detention and in many cities virtually the only detainees who are not tortured severely (indeed, sickeningly) are those who pay bribes. In Brazil it is routine for police stations to be equipped with torture apparatus, and thousands are killed annually by police death squads. Although I do not want to depreciate the significance of the police abuses that do take place in the United States, I know of no evidence that in recent years more than a tiny fraction of the more than 10 million annual arrests involve torture. A large number of complaints involve lesser forms of police abuse; they should be denounced for what they are without overstatement.

On the other hand, given the current trend in Supreme Court decisions, I would not be at all surprised if the incidence of police torture here were to rise dramatically.

Aryeh Neier

TEMPESTUOUS IN A TEAPOT

Hoboken, N.J.

As an older woman I must express my profound offense at Christopher Hitchens's flippant reference to the "tempestuous" Barbara Bush in his July 1 "Minority Report." Had Mrs. Bush made any effort to appear sexy or tempestuous, such a remark might be understandable, though even then I would prefer not to add to the embarrassment. But to ridicule her simply for being older, white-haired, thick-figured and whatever else Hitchens finds amusing is an insult to all women, who have a right to age without withdrawing from public view.

Ridicule her political attitudes, her choice of a husband, her corniness in lending her name to a book told from her little dog's point of view. No doubt the woman has other failings that her position makes her fair game for noting. But it is cheap and dangerous to fault even the most offensive member of a group for qualities that relate only to her group's status. *Sara Berry*

HITCHENS REPLIES

Washington

What makes Sara Berry think I was talking about Barbara *Bush*? *Christopher Hitchens*

CORRECTION

In the July 15/22 issue, Hendrik Hertzberg's name was misspelled. Our apologies.

COMING UP

Randall Kennedy on Thurgood Marshall

The Nation welcomes letters—typed, double spaced and no longer than 300 words, please.

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EDITORIALS.

Emerson, Thomas

The passing of the great civil libertarian and legal scholar Thomas Emerson, in this season when the issues that he championed are much discussed, recalls a little history. The year was 1959. The place was Yale Law School. The subject was The Case Against the House Un-American Activities Committee. The speaker was Joe Rauh, the quintessential anticommunist liberal. The sponsor was an umbrella group known as the New Haven Council for Civil Liberties, whose chair was Rabbi Robert Goldburg.

Rauh was in the news because the courts had recently overturned a contempt-of-Congress conviction of his client the playwright Arthur Miller, and Miller was slated to introduce him. As it happened, Rabbi Goldburg had performed the nuptials for Miller and Marilyn Monroe, and word spread among Yale law students that Miller would be accompanied by his bride. Never have so many budding corporate lawyers developed such a swift interest in civil liberties. The house was packed.

But for the students, there was a last-minute hitch. When Rauh had accepted the invitation he hadn't realized that the sponsoring coalition included among its constituents such a suspect organization as the Emergency Civil Liberties Committee. The E.C.L.C. had been founded in 1951 precisely be-

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cause the American Civil Liberties Union had qualms about defending the rights of Communists and those on the Attorney General's list of subversive organizations. The new group itself had then come under government scrutiny. Rauh would give his speech as planned, he told his old friend Yale law professor Tom Emerson, but would dissociate himself from such politically unsavory sponsorship. Whereupon Miller, apparently unsettled by the prospect of a political face-off between his lawyer and his rabbi, decided to stay at home.

Rauh proceeded to eviscerate HUAC that night, although he "reluctantly" conceded that it did perform the useful service of alerting innocent citizens to Communist fronts and fellow-traveling organizations such as the E.C.L.C. Enter Professor Emerson. "I rise in defense of the Emergency Civil Liberties Committee," he said, and briskly made it clear why he and Carey McWilliams and I.F. Stone and Corliss Lamont and others, friends of *The Nation* all, thought it important to fill the gap left by a nervous A.C.L.U. Having helped found the new organization yet staying active in the older one, Emerson was among the few civil libertarians of stature on speaking terms with both. Refusing to play the demagogic politics of anticommunism, he stood squarely for what he called absolutist free speech principles, and he converted what could have been an occasion for sectarian infighting into an open and eloquent lesson on the imperatives of democracy.

The performance was vintage Emerson. Tommy the Commie, as his colleagues affectionately called him, had a reputation as a political rabble-rouser, having run for Governor of Connecticut on Henry Wallace's Progressive Party slate in 1948 (withdrawing when Chester Bowles, whom he admired, got the Democratic nomination), and then having accepted the presidency of the left-wing National Lawyers Guild at the zenith of McCarthyism and being in the forefront of those who defended victims of the Smith Act. Yet, for all that, anyone who had dealings with him was struck by his quiet, judicious manner. As one colleague put it, "Emerson is not simply committed to the due process of law; he is addicted to it." A law teacher who was a student of Emerson's in the 1960s recalled Emerson's class discussion of *Brown v. Board of Education* and said that until Emerson talked about the case, it had never occurred to him that there was a plausible argument to be made for "separate but equal," a principle against which Emerson effectively fought all his professional life. (Indeed, the student was left uncertain whether his professor, on balance, approved of the decision.)

As a scholar, Emerson's pioneering casebook on political and civil rights and his classic on the First Amendment, *The System of Freedom of Expression*, were, in the words of Louis Pollak, once a colleague, now a judge, "more than merely authoritative, they are works which reordered the line of inquiry for those who have come after." As a lawyer, his cases included *Griswold v. Connecticut*, in which the Supreme Court invalidated a state law prohibiting the use of contraceptives and laid the groundwork for *Roe v. Wade*; and *Sweezy v. New Hampshire*, in which the Court overturned the contempt conviction arising from university lecturer Paul Sweezy's refusal to cooperate with a state legislature investigating subversive activities. He wrote the amicus brief in *Sweatt v. Painter*, a case argued by Thurgood Marshall, in which the Court rejected state-mandated racial segregation in American legal education. And he was in the vanguard pushing for women's equality under the law, a cause that eventually led to the movement for the Equal Rights Amendment.

It is one of the more scandalous limitations of our cold war democracy that a man like Tom Emerson was never seen as a conceivable nominee to the Supreme Court—and one of its ironies that his erstwhile student Clarence Thomas should now be poised for the job. Given the rest of his résumé, one harbors only the faintest hope that Thomas's experience as Emerson's student would return and rub off on him, no less than on the Court itself, should he be approved by the Senate. But on the occasion of Emerson's passing, it is appropriate to note that the best chance for frustrating the President's continuing effort to stack the court with right-wing ideologues may come from a coalition of civil rightsniks, feminists and civil libertarians whose values were informed and defined by the battles for human dignity that Tom Emerson fought and that his life encapsulated.

FOLLOW-UP:

In a recent editorial [see John T. Schuler and Jonathan M. M. Soroko, "Lethal Injections," April 22], we voiced strong support for efforts to give sterile hypodermic needles to drug addicts in New York City. The latest development on the legal front is the acquittal of eight activists, mostly from ACT UP, who had been arrested for illegal possession of hypodermic needles while attempting to distribute them. Judge Laura Drager based her ruling on the "necessity justification." Taking note of the spread of AIDS in New York via contaminated needles, the judge held that the actions of the defendants "served to avert the risks of infection for some individuals." The choice, she said, was between "death by using dirty needles" and "drug addiction by using clean needles." We commend Judge Drager's wise words to officials in New York City and elsewhere.

Gun Smoke

As recently as last year the chances of Congress adopting gun control legislation ranged from unlikely to farfetched. Things have changed. The Senate's adoption of a handgun control measure as part of Joseph Biden's crime bill, following the House's enactment of similar legislation, sends a clear signal that the National Rifle Association's omnipotence is eroding. Even the N.R.A.'s friend President Bush has indicated that he might accept a waiting period for handgun purchases if the crime bill contains certain other provisions.

Although there is debate over the potential effectiveness of the Brady bill, the central argument against it is that it infringes the right to bear arms guaranteed by the Second

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Amendment. It's time to scotch this myth, relentlessly purveyed by the N.R.A., once and for all. Consider the text of the amendment: "A well-regulated militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear arms, shall not be infringed." Were it not for the Framers' desire to assure the continued existence of a "well-regulated militia," the amendment would not exist.

Some scholars argue that if the Framers merely wanted to protect state militias, they would have said so more clearly. Writing in the *Yale Law Journal*, Sanford Levinson wondered "why the Framers did not simply say something like 'Congress shall have no power to prohibit state-organized and directed militias.' Perhaps they in fact meant to do something else." Perhaps. But one can also ask why they didn't begin the amendment with a command, like the First Amendment's "Congress shall make no law," limiting the right to bear arms. That would have demonstrated a clear desire to make guns the focal point of the amendment.

Others contend that by definition the term "militia" refers to every "able-bodied" citizen and that anyone in that category has the right to bear arms. While this argument has some historical support, there are powerful responses to it. First, the amendment states that the militia must be well regulated; the intention is to preserve the militia as an organized unit, not to insure an individual's right to purchase a firearm. Second, at the time the amendment was enacted many people kept guns in their homes for use in the local militia. The Second Amendment was enacted to prevent the federal government from wielding too much power by having the only standing army and the only weapons. Today, the state militias that the Framers had envisioned no longer exist, so it can hardly be argued that individuals' weapons are for use in them. Like the Third Amendment's prohibition of forcing people to quarter soldiers in their homes, the Second's protection of militias has little relevance today.

Even if the language of the Second Amendment were debatable, judicial interpretation of it has been anything but that. The courts have consistently held that the Second Amendment does not bar restrictions on gun control legislation. The only Supreme Court case directly addressing the issue is *United States v. Miller*, a 1939 ruling on a challenge to the National Firearms Act. The Court unanimously held that a sawed-off shotgun did not have "some reasonable relationship to the preservation or efficiency of a well-regulated militia." In *United States v. Lewis* (1980) the Court solidified the *Miller* holding, stating: "These legislative restrictions on the use of firearms are neither based upon constitutionally suspect criteria, nor do they trench upon any constitutionally protected liberties. See *United States v. Miller.*"

Lower-court decisions have been even more contemptuous of N.R.A.-like arguments. In *Eckert v. City of Philadelphia* (1973), for example, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit ruled that the appellant was "completely wrong" in asserting that the city's regulation of the transfer and purchase of firearms violated his Second Amendment right. The court went even further: "It must be remembered that the right to keep and bear arms is not a right given by the United States Constitution." And in *Cody v. United States* (1972) the Court of Appeals for the Eighth Circuit used language relevant to the Brady bill: "It has been settled that the Second Amendment is not an absolute bar to Congressional regulation of the use or possession of firearms." Just this past January the Supreme Court refused to hear a challenge to a law banning the manufacture and sale of new fully automatic machine guns. While such a refusal does not in itself mean that the Court approved of the lower court's decision, the fact that every federal court has interpreted the amendment in only one way makes it highly unlikely that the N.R.A. can persuade the Supreme Court to change course.

Precedent aside, the N.R.A.'s absolutist interpretation of the amendment is problematic. To claim that the Second Amendment prevents Congress from passing any gun control legislation is akin to saying that the First Amendment bars Congress from enacting espionage or perjury laws, or the states from permitting any libel and slander actions, because it states, "Congress shall make no law . . . abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press." If the unequivocal language of the First Amendment cannot be interpreted absolutely, how can the far more opaque words of the Second?

The Brady bill, particularly the Senate's version, is sensible legislation. Nothing in the Second Amendment bars its enactment.

DANIEL ABRAMS

Daniel Abrams, a student at Columbia Law School, has written several articles on the Second Amendment. He is a summer associate at Willkie, Farr & Gallagher.

★

ZACHARY TAYLOR, R. (MOSTLY) I.P.

1850

Taylor, called Old Rough and Ready,
Had a gut-ache. Once in bed, he
Howled with pain, and cursed, and thrashed about.
More than Taylor's gorge was rising.
Then he started in demising.
Gluttony was blamed: He'd just pigged out.

1991

"Poison!" folks said. On this basis,
He was dug up, checked for traces.
(Zach by then was hardly at his peak.)
Finding none in or around him,
They replaced him where they'd found him.
Zachary was famous for a week.

Calvin Trillin

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BEAT THE DEVIL.

The Patriot Game

Ardmore, Ireland

One of the big broadcasting successes this summer in Europe has been Radio Finland's weekend newscast in Latin. Begun as a promotional stunt, the five-minute bulletin has attracted a loyal following among shortwave listeners. I picked it up at 11,750 kilohertz and understood about a quarter of it as the phrases hurried by: "Germani limitem inter ipsos . . . Poloni autem . . . se iura minoritatis Germanorum in Polonia habitantium . . . nationibus potentissimis . . . nuclearibus. . . ."

This reminder of a time, half a millennium ago, when Europe was cemented by a common language and culture, stood in pleasing contrast to what is going on in the Balkans, where scenes in Slovenia, Croatia and Serbia evoke some of the nastiest chapters of racist nationalism in the twentieth century. Too bad Navasky and his associates did not get something from Kucan, Milosevic and Tudjman, bosses of Slovenia, Serbia and Croatia respectively, on their view of patriotism and who is fit to be reckoned part of the *patria*.

The Slovenes themselves have made haste, amid celebrations of newfound nationhood, to declare an amnesty for collaborators with the Axis powers. A few hundred miles north the Slovakians are dusting off their own proud heritage, evoking the salad years of Father Jozef Tiso, Catholic wartime leader who Aryanized the property of Jews and arranged with Hitler for their transport to death camps farther north.

It's enough to make one yearn for the Austro-Hungarian Empire, which did impose upon large portions of Middle Europe some kind of transnational respect for minorities, as did the Communists in the postwar period now concluded. Of course, the Austro-Hungarian Empire didn't seem so great to many of its inhabitants. "From the charnel house of the Vienna cabinet," cried Louis Kossuth in 1848, "a pestilential air breathes on us, which dulls our nerves and paralyzes the flight of our spirit." Metternich's dominions were known as the prison house of nations, and the saying was that forbidden books were the only ones read and forbidden newspapers the only ones believed. On the other hand, the Habsburgs did bring Sacher torte wherever they extended their rule. They made a dessert and they called it peace.

Your Nation or Mine?

When I used the phrase "respect for minorities" I was thinking of the late George Vesel, whom I mentioned here before, after my brother Andrew and I spent a day with him in Monterey in the mid-1980s. As a teenager Vesel had stood, on June 28, 1914, in the main street of Sarajevo as the Archduke Franz Ferdinand and his wife drove by. Then Vesel's schoolmate Gavrilo Princip tossed the bomb that killed the imperial pair, bringing World War I five weeks later.

Vesel said that Princip had joined the conspiracy because his girlfriend had jilted him. This is somewhat contradicted by Princip's demeanor in court. When the judge asked repentant prisoners to stand up, all did so except for Princip, who said he was sorry to have robbed some children of their parents, sorry too that he had killed the Archduchess, particularly as she was a Czech, but not sorry that he had killed the Archduke, since that had been his intent.

The Sarajevo conspirators were Croats, Serbs and Muslims, and they desired a nation in which the diverse people of Yugoslavia should live in free and equal union. It was racism, not nationalism, that undermined Yugoslav unity after the new state was set up by the Serbian King. Hubert Butler, the Irish scholar, argued in *Escape From the Anthill* that it was "because nationalism lacked a philosophy that in the early twenties it began to decay and racialism took its place. The first signs of this degeneration came in 1923, when by the Treaty of Lausanne in exchange for Turks from Europe over a million Greeks were moved from the coast of Asia Minor, where they had lived for three thousand years. This ghastly crime was committed so efficiently under the auspices of the League of Nations that it won universal applause. What Churchill was later to call 'the disentanglement of populations' began to seem a sensible and modern way of solving finally an ancient problem."

In 1944 Churchill called expulsion "the most lasting and satisfactory method" of dealing with the 7.5 million Germans of the East. The Germans, naturally enough, took a different view. "To drive men out of their homes," went the Exiles' Charter, "spells spiritual death. . . . Hence we feel called upon to demand that the right to one's home be recognized as one of the basic rights given by God to man."

Apropos the right to a home, and hence the right of return, *Yediot Aharonot*, a Hebrew-language paper in Israel, reported on a recent meeting between Foreign Minister David Levi and German President Richard von Weizsäcker and Chancellor Helmut Kohl on the matter of Soviet Jews migrating to Germany. Levi was prompted by reports that Germany's embassy in Moscow was issuing 110 permits a day to Jews who wanted to settle in the newly united Reich. It seems Levi's mission—on behalf of his government's traditional stance that Russian Jews be compelled to immigrate to Israel—was successful. *Yediot Aharonot* stated that "Israel's embassy in Bonn commented today that Chancellor Kohl had shown understanding for the Israeli position that Germany must not encourage the migration of Jews from the Soviet Union to it. Kohl had promised to help prevent the granting of refugee status to Soviet Jews arriving in Germany, which gives them the right to settle in that country." The paper added that the German Jewish establishment is "openly striving to enlarge the number of Jews in Germany with the aim of 'restoring the Jewry of Ashkenaz to its old glory.' "

In the midst of his reminiscences Vesel, discussing his plans for a book, asked if I thought publishers would turn him down because he was a Jew. I said I didn't think so. He was, said Vesel, the son of the chief rabbi of Sarajevo. When the Emperor Franz Josef had himself once come to Sarajevo he had been welcomed by dignitaries including Vesel's father, and then the Emperor had kissed young George on the head. Vesel touched his bald crown at the memory.

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ALEXANDER COCKBURN

The Bulldog Breed

The spirit of forgiveness filling Slovenian bosoms is something yearned for by the inhabitants of the Channel Islands, now under investigation for their comportment during World War II. People sometimes ask how the British would have acted if the Germans had invaded. On the evidence of those ancient possessions the Channel Islands, which the Germans did invade, the British would mostly have collaborated as placidly as their Continental neighbors.

The local governments of Guernsey, Jersey and the other islands passed anti-Semitic laws without delay. Lists of Jews were also provided. Those thus betrayed were deported to their deaths. A camp was set up in Alderney in which 7,000 prisoners of the Germans were starved, tortured, their bodies thrown over the cliffs to be eaten by crabs.

A recent British law requiring investigation of war crimes committed by citizens (or those given citizenship in the war's aftermath) is already leading to fresh disclosures. Documents quoted in the *Observer* on June 30 show Victor Carey, head of Guernsey's civil administration, zealously promulgating the Nuremberg Laws and other anti-Jewish edicts. In one 1940 letter to the Nazi field commander Carey wrote, "Regarding the registration of Jews, . . . I can assure you there will be no delay as far as I'm concerned." After the war there were no prosecutions in the islands for collaboration. Indeed, Carey was made bailiff of Guernsey and knighted.

My father, himself on a Nazi death list, asked the man who ran his local pub and who had visited the Channel Islands after the war why the inhabitants had behaved in this disgusting fashion. "But Claud," the friend answered matter-of-factly, "they thought the Nazis were going to win."

Return and the Native

"To drive men out of their homes spells spiritual death," said those expelled Germans, some of whom had done a bit of expelling, and worse, themselves. Their sentiments would be heartily echoed by Native Americans on the eve of the quincentenary of Columbus's voyage. "To celebrate," said Augusto Cana Mamani of the Tupac Amaru Inca Regional Council of Cuzco, Peru, "would be like the Jews rendering homage to Hitler every few years, or the Japanese revering Truman for Nagasaki and Hiroshima."

Those remarks were cited by José Barreiro in a column on "What 1992 Means to American Indians" in *Native Nations*, a fine bimonthly published by the Solidarity Foundation ($20 a year; Suite 2245, 175 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10010). Its editor is Alexander Ewen, who gave my colleague Adam Goodheart updates on some showdowns on Indian rights revolving around these questions of home theft and spiritual death. A group of Indians in South Dakota and Wyoming are planning to declare their independence and will try to retake land in the Black Hills. Farther west, in Nevada, the government plans to seize back a huge slice of the state from the Western Shoshones, who have been occupying it for as long as anyone can remember. In 1979 the Supreme Court ruled that the land had been stolen by whites in the late nineteenth century and decreed that the government compensate the Indians at the late-nineteenth-century rate of about 2 cents an acre plus interest. The Shoshones said Keep your money, we're staying, so the $26 million award went to the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the Interior Department. Now the government has told the Shoshones to clear out their cattle, their horses and themselves.

The biggest fight is over the James Bay scheme, the largest hydroelectric building project in North American history, which will displace more than 18,000 Crees and Inuits with the erection of twelve dams on eight major rivers, destined to create a body of water the size of Lake Ontario and disfigure an area four times the size of New York State. Ewen says Indian efforts next year will focus not so much on genocide as on ecological destruction resulting from European conquest. He says, correctly, "If you look at areas of the world that are under threat and ask who is protecting them, it's the Indians and the indigenous populations."

My History or Yours?

Bloodhounds yelping along the P.C. trail will have a wonderful time denouncing anti-Columbus stuff as lily-livered and, let's face it, antipatriotic. Listen to C. Vann Woodward in the July 18 issue of *The New York Review of Books* giving a positive review to Dinesh D'Souza's *Illiberal Education* and calling on intellectuals of good conscience to rally against the enemies of freedom, by which he means the P.C. *canaille*.

From D'Souza, Woodward discovers with horror that *I, Rigoberta Menchu: An Indian Woman in Guatemala* is a course book at Stanford and that in D'Souza's view it "best reveals the premises underlying the new Stanford curriculum."

"It is," writes Woodward, sounding like Lady Bracknell, "the transcription of an oral autobiography of an unlettered woman first published in 1983 telling how, after her parents were killed in a massacre, she turned against European culture, renounced marriage and motherhood, and became a feminist and a Marxist." This is what passes for intellectual discussion in *The New York Review* these days. Woodward obviously took what D'Souza says about the book on trust. Woodward's evocation of Menchu reminds me of my classics master's précis of the plot of *Oedipus Rex*, "Boy meets girl, who is his mother." Menchu, for example, remains a Christian and thus has not broken with at least one aspect of Western culture. And far from being the illiterate exercise he suggests, the book is a particularly fine example of the oral historian's art, with text introduced, transcribed and edited by Elisabeth Burgos-Debray, recently director of the Maison d'Amerique Latine in Paris.

Menchu is a most impressive person. I'd love to hear a debate between her and Woodward on what core courses in the history of the Americas should contain. I'm surprised, all the same, at his foolish alarums. I once met him in a plane on the way to Key West and he seemed a decent old stick, much interested in the possibility of buying a secondhand station wagon off me. It just shows how people become unhinged when they think their core values are under attack. Ask any Croat.

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BELTWAY BANDITS.

DAVID CORN

■ Judge Thomas's Neighborhood

In their excavation of Judge Clarence Thomas's character and philosophical disposition, members of the Senate Judiciary Committee might sift through back issues of the *Lincoln Review*, a quarterly journal published by the Lincoln Institute for Research and Education. Thomas has sat on the editorial advisory board of this magazine, a bastion of black conservatism, since 1981—far longer than he has sat on any court—and its record during his tenure there should at least prompt questions as to the ideas that animate the judge.

Thomas's written opinions in the *Review* have not been extensive. In 1982 he assailed government interference in the economy—citing laws that establish a minimum wage, that require expensive licenses for taxi drivers and that protect "discriminatory labor unions"—as attacks on the freedom of blacks and others. In 1988 at great length he defended Thomas Sowell, a fellow black conservative who has scorned affirmative action, placing the man in the "pantheon of black Americans such as Frederick Douglass, Booker T. Washington, and Martin Luther King, Jr." He noted his own strong aversion to affirmative action and hailed Sowell for presenting "a much-needed antidote to cliches" about the discrimination women face in the workplace. He also argued that individual freedom derives from free enterprise: "Because we Americans are a commercial people, we express our freedom most typically in the diverse means by which we take to gain wealth. And this wealth can in turn serve as a means to higher ends."

In 1986 the *Review* published remarks he made in tribute to the nuns who taught in the Catholic schools he attended in Georgia: "They have taught me to *believe* in God and the word of God." To the nuns, Thomas declared, "I will have no part of this *orgy of self indulgence* that is running rampant in our society. . . . I will *not forsake* you."

Secularists might find something to worry about in the tone of that speech. Abortion-rights activists should note that the *Review* has taken a fiercely anti-choice stand while Thomas has served on its board. Patrick Monaghan, the general counsel for the Milwaukee-based Catholic League for Religious and Civil Rights, decried abortion in its pages in 1983 as "an elite-oriented attempt to judicially slaughter the poverty class, particularly the black portion of it." He added, "The time to move against the racist Abortion Power is now." In 1985 Edward Smith, an associate editor, proclaimed that "the fetus is an unborn human baby and therefore its destruction—for whatever the reasons—is an act of murder." He compared abortion to slavery and likened those who firebomb abortion clinics to John Brown, the abolitionist who stormed the government arsenal at Harpers Ferry in 1859.

■ Does He Read This Stuff?

Much of the *Review*'s content has been standard Reaganite fare—sometimes delivered with a racial twist. An article defending the Strategic Defense Initiative claimed Star Wars spending would lead to "new pathways out of the bondage of economic dependence and welfarism." A 1986 editorial declared capital punishment "an idea whose time has come—again" and pooh-poohed the argument that race is a factor in who is executed. J.A. Parker and Allan Brownfeld—the editor and an assistant editor—castigated the Reagan Administration in 1982 for not doing enough to ban affirmative action. (Both were on Reagan's transition team for the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, which Thomas came to head.) They also chastised Reagan for backing an extension of the Voting Rights Act to "court favor" with civil rights groups. One article opposed a national holiday for Martin Luther King Jr. and recommended that a commemorative coin be issued instead. An editorial criticized the Commission on Civil Rights for reporting that persistent discrimination is the main reason blacks and Latinos are unemployed at higher rates than whites. (That capitalism is the cure for racism is one prominent motif of the *Review*.) And a 1983 piece argued there was a pressing need for judicial activism—in order to implement a conservative agenda.

On the more wild side, the *Review* favorably evaluated a book that suggested that Karl Marx was a devil worshiper. In 1986 it published an article by John Snyder, the Washington lobbyist for the Citizens Committee for the Right to Keep and Bear Arms, which observed that most of the evil in the world—including homosexuality, adultery, murder, abortion and communism—is the handiwork of the Antichrist. And the journal has frequently charged that South Africa's African National Congress has been controlled by the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.

The *Review*'s take on the A.N.C. is understandable. Editor Parker and William Keyes, a contributing editor, ran a consulting firm that worked for South Africa; a South African newspaper reported in 1988 that U.S. records showed Keyes was receiving $360,000 a year from Pretoria. Keyes also directs the Black Political Action Committee, which has supported Jesse Helms. In the 1970s and 1980s, Parker was a member of the U.S. affiliate of the World Anti-Communist League, whose chapters in other nations contained neo-Nazis and right-wing terrorists. Parker has also worked with Causa, an anticommunist group founded by Sun Myung Moon's Unification Church. Both Parker and Keyes sit on the advisory board of the American Freedom Coalition, another group connected to the Unification Church.

The pedigrees of Parker and Keyes, and anyone else involved with the *Review*, are relevant only to the extent that they show the milieu in which Thomas apparently feels comfortable. His position on the board—which he should have declared on government disclosure forms and did not—has compromised his judicial integrity. Judges are not supposed to associate with entities that adopt controversial stands, particularly on issues that might come before them. Thomas should not be measured by the writings and affiliations of others. But as an editorial advisor, what does he think of the opinions expressed in the *Review* by his comrades? According to Parker, Thomas never complained about any of the *Review*'s articles. Does silence imply assent?

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MINORITY REPORT.

CHRISTOPHER HITCHENS

There was always something missing from the "October surprise" hypothesis (now at long last being openly discussed in those mysterious circles where "respectability" and "credibility" are to be found). The absent ingredient was Ronald Reagan, the man for whose orgiastically celebrated inauguration the whole hostage racket was concocted. Why was nobody asking, Did Reagan know? Why was nobody asking the even more fascinating corollary question, Was Reagan told? As the never-to-be-forgotten cognition crisis of 1987 had demonstrated, the two questions were, in fascinating ways, not the same question.

An unspoken consensus seemed to have developed between the partisans of the theory and its increasingly ill-armed detractors—as if to say, Let's not get into the question of Ronnie's state of mind. It's all too exhausting and inconclusive when viewed from one side, and all too embarrassing and awkward when viewed from another.

But since when has a President relied so much on his defenders attesting to his diminished capacity? And since when have a politician's critics had to prove that he is mentally competent to, as it were, stand trial? No, said the wiser heads, let's leave it. The old boy hasn't got the brains of a lizard and that's it.

To think that we had so little faith. On Saturday, June 15, Reagan was playing golf at Thousand Oaks in California, and playing it with George Herbert Walker himself. A reporter asked about the October surprise. While Bush stood off to one side, biting through his putter, the elder statesman got right to the heart of the matter:

> This whole thing that I was worried about that as a campaign thing is absolute fiction. I did some things to try the other way. . . . From the very beginning that they were ever held there, every effort on my part was to get them home.

Now, it has never before been admitted that the campaign machinery of Ronald Reagan did any "things" at all in connection with the hostage crisis of 1980. Asked whether those "things" involved contact with Teheran, Reagan replied, "Not by me." Invited to say whether any of his subordinates had made such contact, he coyly answered that he could not "get into details" and added intriguingly that "some of those things are still classified." At that point, the handlers moved in and hurried the loquacious old booby away. Classified? *Classified?*

Well, now. Even if the Reagan campaign *was* bidding for the release of the hostages when it met with envoys of the Ayatollah, it was too modest to tell the Carter Administration of its efforts. This would mean that the Khomeini people had their choice of American negotiating partners—official and unofficial—and, even more satisfying from Teheran's point of view, that the official partner didn't know of its rival's existence. As Gary Sick pointed out on another occasion, there is an old Persian saying that it's better to have two bidders for your rug than one bidder. (This piece of Farsi folk wisdom translates quite well into American business English.) Thus, even on Reagan's own defense—doing "some things to try the other way"—a prima facie case could be brought under the Logan Act, passed by Congress with the specific intention of preventing private deals with foreign powers.

One way of thinking about this, since the Democratic leadership in Congress is wetting itself with anticipatory terror about the accusation of "partisanship" should it permit a serious inquiry, is as follows. Suppose the Reagan-Bush Administration had been negotiating for a hostage release that, just for once, did not involve illegal arms transfers. Suppose, further, that members of the Democratic National Committee had been found meeting in secret with the kidnappers. These Democrats might then plead that they wanted only "to try the other way" to expedite a hostage release. Now imagine what Reagan, Bush and the rest of the pack would have said.

Serious evidence continues to accumulate that the 1980 meetings quickly became negotiations for a delay. The special combined report by ABC News and the London *Financial Times* transmitted on the evening of June 20 found that the purported Iranian middlemen could indeed prove they had been in Madrid at the stated times. It found, further, that William Casey, despite his exhausting schedule as the Reagan-Bush campaign manager, was "missing" for precisely those days. People who have been sneering "conspiracy theory" now have a lot of word-eating to do. If anything is conspiring here, it is the facts, which continue both to multiply and to add up.

Pretty soon, I predict, a cover story will circulate. It will seek to blame everything on the "loose cannon" William Casey, who "acted alone" and did not trouble his political masters. I don't myself see how this consoling interpretation will survive the allegation made by ABC and the *Financial Times* that beginning in the summer of 1980, after Casey had arranged for his Iranian contact to meet with an Israeli general, and concluding by the time of Reagan's inauguration:

> A high-ranking military officer from Israeli Defense Industries ultimately sold a total of $150 million worth of weapons and ammunition to the Iranians. The material was Israeli-manufactured under a U.S. license, 105- and 155-millimeter artillery shells, 100-millimeter tank ammunition, also 106-millimeter antitank guns and ammunition. Payment was made to an Israeli company in Switzerland through a letter of credit at a Swiss bank.

If this turns out to be independently verifiable (and I stick to the polite use of the conditional tense that is still common among those who follow the story), then it means that during a presidential arms embargo and a presidential election, Israeli militarists concerted their covert arms sales with an American political campaign. This in turn would mean that Casey's own unsecured actions would have been insufficient. The Israelis are too shrewd to do business without better assurances than that. They must have had good reason to believe that they were obliging the next President, and the next Vice President, of the United States. So we have the guns, and we have more and more smoke. Smoking gun, anyone?

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ARTICLES.

NEGOTIATING DEMOCRACY

The Teamsters' Toughest Contract

WILLIAM SERRIN

Lake Buena Vista, Florida

No one at the Dolphin Hotel, a lime green and sand-colored adjunct to the garish Walt Disney World complex near Orlando, had seen it coming. There had been signs, of course. Here for the first time in the eighty-eight-year history of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters were delegates who had been chosen by the membership in a secret ballot, the result of a consent decree signed by the union and the government in March 1989. Here too was Ron Carey, president of Local 804 in New York City, who had been campaigning for a nomination as union president since Labor Day 1989 and who, as the first serious non-establishment candidate in anyone's memory, conveyed the hopes of the union's dissident faction. Still, what began on the fourth day of this convention with a proposal on a technical matter had the effect of a tropical rain that turns, unexpectedly, into a storm of magnificent, possibly transforming power.

That afternoon a delegate rose to make a motion from the floor—an act almost unheard of at a Teamsters convention. Union members should have the right to vote on supplemental agreements to master contracts, he proposed. Such agreements, negotiated privately by union local and company representatives, are often sweetheart deals, weakening working conditions provided in the national contract. Union leaders, wishing to preserve their autonomy, had rejected such a reform four times in the past, most recently just before the convention. Now it was put to the membership's representatives. A voice vote was taken.

"It appears the ayes have it," the convention's chair and Teamsters secretary-treasurer said, somewhat mystified, as the crowd thundered in applause.

Thus emboldened, another delegate rose and moved to increase strike benefits. The Teamsters strike fund stands at $86.8 million. Since 1981, benefits have been $45 a week, kept low by union executives who historically have hated strikes and have regarded high benefits as unwelcome encouragement. The proposal on the floor set benefits at $100 a week.

Suddenly the convention had the tenor of a high-stakes poker game. "This body doesn't hesitate to give great salaries and great benefits [to executives]," Mario Ferenac, a delegate from Orlando, said, and upped the amount to $150.

Carl Gentile, from Worcester, Massachusetts, saw Ferenac's $150 and raised him, to $200.

The chair asked for a division of the house. The vote in favor of the proposal was called, and a rhythmic cry was raised: "Stand up! Stand up! Stand up!" Hundreds of delegates were on their feet, and the chant continued. The union had seen nothing like this since Jimmy Hoffa consolidated his power against his enemies four decades before.

"The motion is carried," the chair announced. A great roar swept the hall.

That night the delegates nominated three men for union president: Walter Shea, a top staff man who has served every union president since Hoffa; R.V. Durham, president of Local 391 in Greensboro, North Carolina, and like Shea a longtime member of the Teamsters establishment; and Ron Carey.

The revolt persisted the next day, as delegates considered the matter of the so-called Teamster Air Force, five private jets worth some $18 million, symbols of the high life indulged in by union leaders. Almost unanimously the delegates voted to sell off the jets. By this time they had already voted to limit salaries for top leaders to $225,000. This is exorbitant compared with executive salaries in most unions (and outrageous compared with the pay of most U.S. workers, who average $353 a week). But it was a remarkable step for the Teamsters, which had never challenged its officers' pelf. Many officers draw multiple salaries; 154 made more than $100,000 in 1989 and one, Daniel Ligurotis of Chicago, made $538,000. Likewise, the delegates had earlier voted to establish a national ethical practices committee of outsiders to investigate charges of misconduct in the union, another move aimed largely at the leadership. After the proposal to sell the jets had passed, the chair groused, "The next motion will be to sell the building," referring to the Teamsters' gargantuan marble headquarters in Washington.

The unleashing of democratic impulses at the Dolphin Hotel was stunningly historic, not least because, while it proceeds from the 1989 consent decree giving the government authority to rid the union of corruption and compel reform, it was by no means ordained from above, or inevitable.

For decades the name Teamsters, like that of Beck, Hoffa, Fitzsimmons, Williams and Presser, was virtual shorthand for bully unionism, racketeering, violence, even murder. Three of the union's past five presidents have wound up in jail, and government investigators described it as having a "devil's pact" with the Mafia. Meanwhile, the membership was abused by its leadership's negligent representation, right-wing politics and fierce retaliation for dissent. The reforms instituted to date, in a union with net assets of $206.6 million and a membership of 1.5 million, would have been impossible without government intervention. But the first glimmerings of revolution are largely the result of two forces: the Teamsters for a Democratic Union and Carey's campaign for president. Beginning in 1976 the T.D.U., perhaps the most tenacious labor reform group of the past half-century, brought together a band of several thousand enthusiastic reformers who heroically hec-

William Serrin covered Teamsters conventions and labor affairs for several years for The New York Times. *He is completing a book on Homestead, Pennsylvania, and the collapse of the U.S. steel industry.*

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tored the leadership, assisted the press in revealing Teamsters corruption and insisted that union democracy was possible [see Serrin, "Carey Challenges the Porkchoppers," January 8/15, 1990].

The consent decree was strongly opposed by many liberals and by the conservative A.F.L.-C.I.O., and was viewed with ambivalence by dissidents as an intrusion into internal union affairs. But reformers could not have gone it alone. Unprecedented in American labor, the decree established ground rules for the election of delegates to this convention and of top officers, including the president, in December—also by secret ballot, another first for the union. It allowed the government to oversee union appointments and expenditures, and to ban mobsters and other corrupt officials.

Since the decree was signed, 121 officials and employees, among them eleven International officers, have been charged with misconduct; all have been barred from the union, are suspended or are awaiting court hearings. Top union officers—including William McCarthy, the president; Weldon Mathis, the secretary-treasurer chairing the convention; and eleven vice presidents—will not stand for re-election. More charges and banishments are expected. So far the union, which must pay all government costs associated with the decree, has spent $25 million in carrying it out (though this includes $12 million to union lawyers fighting provisions to which Teamsters executives agreed when they signed on to the decree).

The government's involvement was unmistakable at the convention. All literature had to be approved. Michael Holland, an attorney named by the government to oversee the elections, was frequently at the dais, instructing delegates on procedures and even whispering advice to the 72-year-old McCarthy. Holland had brought with him more than sixty staff members, who ran the voting and counted the ballots.

Men in the Shea and Durham camps, both of which have been frightened by the momentum of Carey's campaign, publicly railed against government intervention. They also got enough delegates to vote to end the consent decree and to reject an order for secret balloting among the rank and file in future delegate elections. A federal judge ruled in May that the convention could not overturn elements of the consent decree, and although the union plans to appeal, high-level government authorities say it has little chance of success.

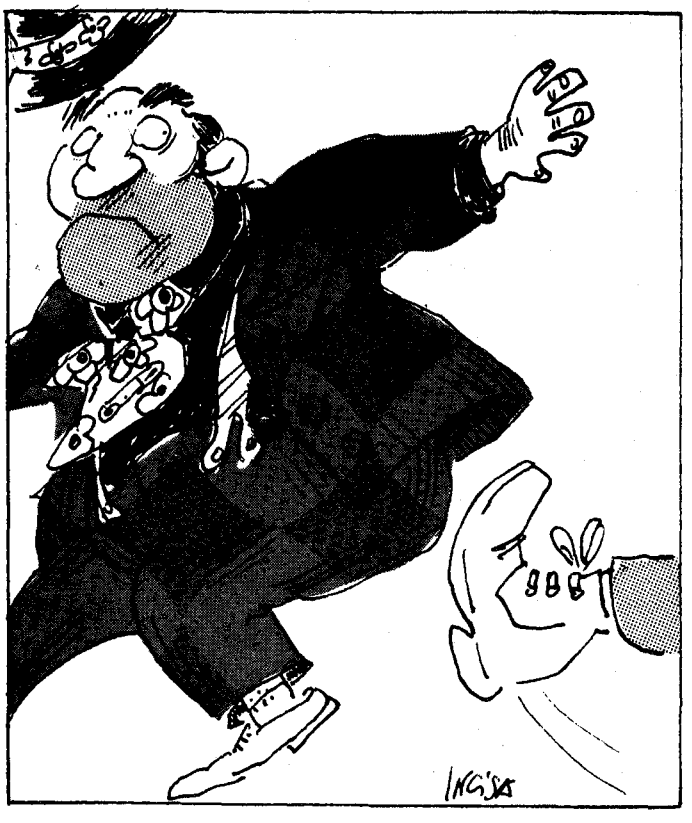
Despite such maneuvers, it was clear that the reforms had had a profound effect on the attitude of the 1,900 delegates and 1,000 alternates. And in fact the effort to remake the Teamsters entails the changing of social behavior in a major American institution as much as it does the establishment of union democracy. At past conventions someone would take the floor at about 4 P.M. and suggest that the meeting be adjourned so that leaders and their wives (only a handful of 622 local presidents and one International staff member are women) could get ready for Joe T.'s party at 8. (Joe T. is Joseph Trerotola, a Teamsters leader from New York and a renowned party-giver. His blast at the previous convention, in Las Vegas in 1986, cost $648,000.) Here not only were there no big parties; there was almost no booze.

Who were these people, Teamsters or Methodists?

Instead of sitting like zombies or packing the hospitality suite, delegates crowded hotel corridors and gathered in their rooms until late at night analyzing votes and assessing what the day's resolutions meant. There were smiles and an enthusiasm not seen at a Teamsters convention in decades.

And why not? For the first time union people felt free to speak their mind. Gone were the plug-uglies of the past, like Gunder Hansen, 6 feet 6 and 300 pounds, who, merely by standing at a convention hall's main entrance, had convinced all but the most foolhardy dissidents to stay on the sidewalk. Here, no one was pummeled; no leader made insulting or threatening remarks. For the first time, too, unionists recognized they might rise in the hierarchy without selling out or genuflecting to their leaders. People like John Morris of Philadelphia and Chuck Mack of San Francisco, both respected mid-level leaders who almost never uttered a word at past conventions, spoke vigorously for reform. Even Joe T. said of the consent decree, "There's some nice things in there." True to his style, he did not elaborate.

Democracy and an end to corruption are not assured for the Teamsters. Other unions, the United Steelworkers for instance, have trappings such as direct elections but are not democratic. As was evident in the maneuvering around votes at the convention, the old guard still wields considerable power. Shea and Durham's people were able to beat back dissidents' motions to prohibit multiple salaries and to set the salary of the union president at $150,000. Meanwhile, as James Grady, the union's general counsel, admitted in Florida when he said the Teamsters would be back in court against the government "as soon as the paperwork is done," the leadership has no compunction about continuing to fight the consent decree with the workers' dues money. Thus, for reformers, December's elections will be pivotal.



ILLUSTRATIONS BY MONICA INCISA

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Each presidential candidate will run with a slate for regional and other national offices. Carey, who received 289 delegate votes, promises tough bargaining and contract enforcement and so far has refused to cut deals with the International's lifers. "We're running against the bums in Washington," he says. He also took the step to place a woman on his slate, Diana Kilmury, a longtime T.D.U. activist.

Shea, despite getting 574 votes, appears finished from the start, his support largely limited to the Northeast. Even his establishment colleague Durham spoke sneeringly of him and called him a tool of Joe T.: "Shea is not his own man and never has been." Shea has a number of strong candidates on his slate and, aping Carey, has included a woman, Vicki Saporta, the union's organizing director. If Carey seems to be running strong, Shea might withdraw, let his slate fend for itself and throw his support behind Durham.

Durham, the clear front-runner, has much Southern charm. (Though at the convention he declared that he knew of no one among the union's estimated 500,000 female members who was qualified for top leadership.) Part of the union machine, he is nevertheless untainted by corruption. He collected 1,001 delegate votes and has remade himself from a quiet member of the ruling party into a campaigner for "positive change," contrasting himself with Carey, whose attacks, he says, have harmed the union. Durham now favors direct elections, an ethics committee and some limits on top salaries. The chutzpah of Durham, and even of Shea, is enormous. Both have been in the union for decades, knew what was going on but kept silent. Now both are running as ardent opponents of corruption and supporters of democracy.

Since 70 percent of convention delegates were union officers, many of them traditional porkchoppers, dependent on the Teamsters' patronage system, delegate totals are a poor gauge of a candidate's support. This fall candidates will have to campaign among rank-and-file workers, at job sites and union halls. Carey, campaigning for nearly two years now, has established a substantial rank-and-file network. Some 100,000 workers have signed petitions supporting him and his slate. Neither Shea nor Durham, both softened by the good life, has done national campaigning among the membership. And as Carey puts it, effective campaigning "is not pulling up to a job site in a stretch limo."

The campaign will likely turn as much on pocketbook and contract matters as on issues of democracy. Carey must make the connection between corruption and sweetheart agreements. He also must clearly articulate—as he did not in his speech to the convention—that he has had a seismic effect on the union already, not only by proposing many of the reforms passed at the convention but also by forcing his competitors in the union to push for improved pay and pensions. And he must block Durham from claiming credit for reforms that he himself or the government had advanced.

Along with fundraising—an aggressive campaign will cost $1 million or more—what Carey calls the apathy bloc will be a problem. Many workers do not know about the elections, let alone who the candidates are. In a union with such an undemocratic past, many have no experience of voting or even attending union meetings. Only 300,000 voted in the delegate elections. The candidates expect 500,000 to vote in December. The union has 3,000 business agents, officials who handle grievances and insure that employers abide by the contract. Since many of these owe their jobs to the union hierarchy, Shea and Durham have an advantage. If each agent brings in 100 votes, these could tip the election.

In any event, the old ways are passing. From San Diego up to Maine, in truck barns and airline terminals, in office buildings and on docks, and in the Teamsters' 600 locals—wherever workers and union people fight to organize—pie-carders and porkchoppers appear to be in trouble. What began with the delegate elections and then burst forth at the convention cannot be stopped. The bottom is out of the tub. The toughest Teamsters and their mob pals are going to have a hard time putting it back in. □

LETTER FROM EUROPE

Fiddling While Rome Smolders

DANIEL SINGER

Rome

Is Italy on the eve of a major political crisis? Is a change of regime, or perhaps even the birth of a new republic, imminent? President Francesco Cossiga, who has been quiet for years, is suddenly performing strange antics; Socialist leader Bettino Craxi waits in the wings, hoping for a change from the parliamentary to the presidential system; the Mafia, octopuslike, spreads its tentacles, while the northern *leghe*, or leagues, reveal both regional jingoism and mainly middle-class discontent; and everybody is fed up with *partitocrazia*, the paralyzing and permanent rule by the parties. No wonder that Rome is rife with rumors of an impending institutional upheaval.

On the other hand, there seems no imperative need for such a drastic solution. Admittedly, the two historic items on the national agenda—a unified European market by the end of 1992 and a common currency before the end of the millennium—are likely to prove a strain on the Italian economy, with its huge budget deficit and hefty public debt. But the capitalist establishment need not fear any dangerous resistance from the left. Why bother, then, to install authoritarian rule? As a pre-emptive strike to take advantage of the opposition's present weakness? France now seems to have been "normalized," along American lines [see Singer, "Socialism's Setting Sun," June 3]. Will it be Italy's turn next? These were some of the puzzling problems I traveled to Italy to discuss with colleagues and political friends.

Mezzogiorno and Mafia

The first time I went to Rome was as a student; I hitchhiked from London. As we approached the Italian capital my Milanese truck driver pointed south and proclaimed with em-

Daniel Singer is The Nation*'s Europe correspondent.*

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phatic contempt, We are entering Africa! He was exaggerating, of course. The dividing line lay much farther south, and even beyond Naples it was not quite Africa. But he drew my attention to Italy's "southern question," to the existence of two countries within one nation, to the gap that still yawns after years of dizzy economic transformation.

Northern Italy is very much part of prosperous Western Europe. It shows in conspicuous consumption—and not only in the big cities. On a recent visit to such smaller towns as Verona and Vigevano, a shoemaking center south of Milan, I was struck by the number of luxurious boutiques reminiscent of Bond Street, the Faubourg St. Honoré or the poshest stretch of Fifth Avenue. Helped no doubt by tax evasion, the local upper classes must have plenty of money to spend. Admittedly, there is no shortage of money in the South either: State subsidies poured down the Southern drain were not lost for everybody, and the Mafia offers its own rewards. But the difference remains striking. The South's per capita product is barely more than half the North's, while the unemployment rate, at 21 percent, is more than three times as high. (This, incidentally, is a topical lesson the East Germans—and Eastern Europeans in general—should ponder before they swallow the message of the Harvard hustlers.) In Italy the gap is in fact even worse than the figures suggest because of the damage wrought by the secret societies.

An Italian TV clip shows a luxurious hotel with liveried flunkies. Then comes the terror—a hand trampled by a heel against broken glass. On the soundtrack, the aria "Nessun dorma" from Puccini's *Turandot* and whispered voices: "Don't ask me, I have three children . . ." Finally, the message ("Mafia. Whoever keeps silent, consents") and a telephone number. Altogether sixty seconds that can now be seen on one commercial and one public channel, with more to come, in an attempt to break the law of *omertà*.

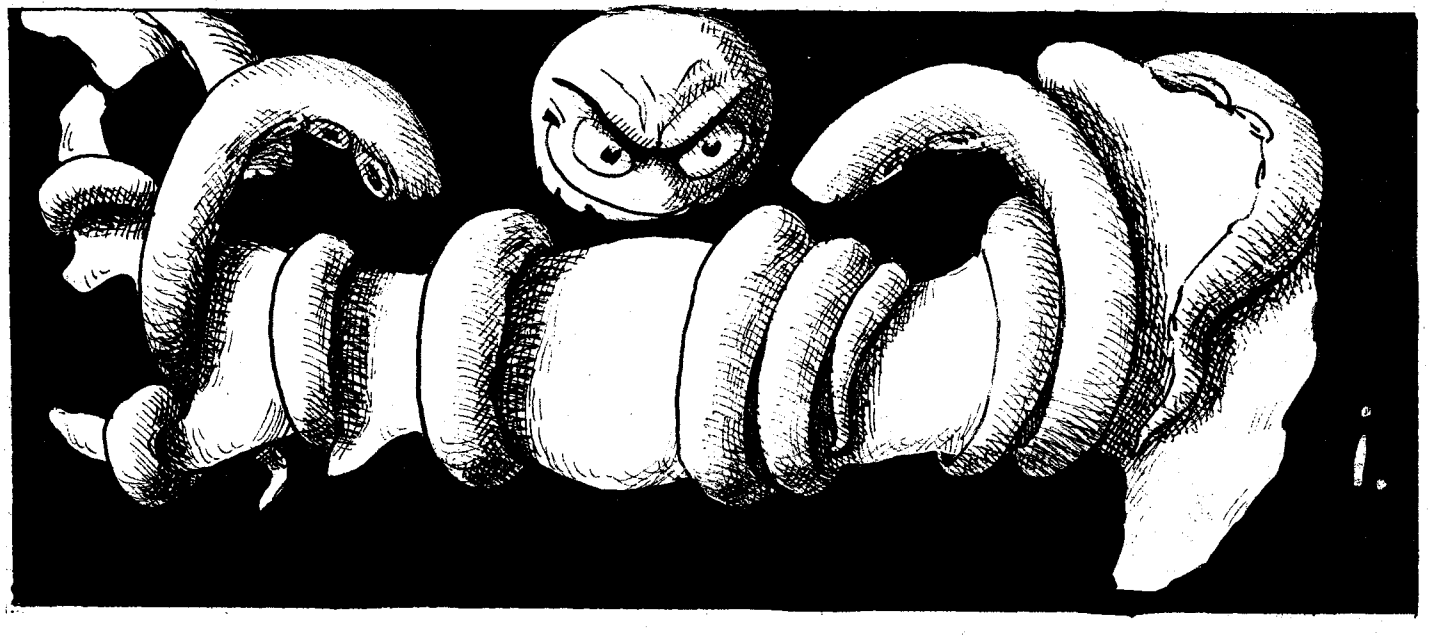
"You can't mention the Mafia as one of the major causes of the current tension," a prominent Sicilian-born journalist objects, "since we have lived with it for years." Others disagree. The Mafia has changed, they argue, since the early 1970s, when it became heavily involved in drugs. It now kills wholesale, sparing neither women nor children. If one includes not only the Sicilian Mafia but the Camorra as well, secret societies now poison political life in Sicily, Calabria and the Naples region. The infection has reached into Apulia, and drug money is making its mark on Milan's financial market. The killers' impunity strengthens the impression not so much of bad government, *malgoverno*, as of its absence, the abdication of central authority.

That TV clip is a sign of impotence rather than determination—and not surprisingly. It is hard to smash the Mafia when it has such strong links with the ruling coalition, particularly the dominant Christian Democrats (D.C.). Indeed, one of the reasons it may be difficult to grasp Italy's prospects is the prevailing confusion between censors and sinners. Cossiga, who now lectures almost daily on the vices of the system, is a pure product of the D.C. Craxi, the Socialists' would-be presidential savior, is the clever leader of a party that has received a much larger share of the spoils during his tenure than that of any previous leader. The snag is that such men get a hearing because of the degree of public discontent.

In France's Footsteps?

This time, arriving in Rome by train, I was struck by the contrast between the glorious sunshine and the darkness of the political climate. Indeed, the mood was reminiscent of France in the winter of 1957-58, when the question was not if but when the tottering Fourth Republic would collapse. In Italy the prophets of doom even had a timetable. After the June 16 local elections in Sicily, which promised to be disastrous for the former Communists (and turned out just so, with their share of the vote dropping from 19.3 to 11.4 percent), the Socialists would precipitate a government crisis. A general election would follow in the autumn, with Sunday, October 6, being tipped as the likely date. Later scenarios varied: a constituent assembly, a referendum to demand the election of the president through universal suffrage, or even more dramatic pressures to alter the Constitution.

The French establishment chose to alter the Constitution and opt for Gaullism in 1958 because it assumed that tradi-



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tional parliamentary democracy would not be able to cope with both the Algerian war and France's entry into the Common Market. Italy has only to deal with the further integration of the European Community. Angelo Ciampi, governor of the Bank of Italy, recently proclaimed that "time is running short" for Italy to catch the European train. He outlined the necessary steps: halve inflation (currently close to 7 percent), bringing it into line with the levels in France and Germany; cut the public-sector borrowing requirement, which still exceeds 10 percent of gross domestic product; and reduce drastically the public debt, which is now slightly larger than that annual product.

That is a tall order, but it does not necessarily require a new system of rule, especially given the weakness of political opposition. The Italian Communist Party, now rechristened the Party of the Democratic Left (P.D.S.), appears bent on its own downfall. Bruno Trentin, the ex-Communist leader of the biggest labor union, the C.G.I.L., expresses the hope that Fiat strongman Cesare Romiti will take over the leadership of the Employers Association (the Confindustria), while the latter stresses the need for strong unions. This is not class struggle but a contest in courtesy. Obviously other reasons are needed to explain the rumors of crisis.

This government by coalition is clientelismo *developed into a fine art.*

The *leghe*, of which the Lombard League is so far the strongest, provide some clues. The movement is often wrongly compared to *poujadisme*, the revolt of small shopkeepers in the poorer parts of France against commercial concentration. Rather, the leagues are a rebellion of richer regions unwilling to subsidize poorer ones. In a country that has been unified for only 120 years, there is apparently still scope for regional jingoism. League members dislike not only the newcomers from Africa but Italian migrants from the South as well. Predictably, they are against high taxation and in favor of strong government. The various leagues are expected to get about 10 percent of the national vote, much more in their Northern strongholds. So far they are merely unpleasant, but they could turn nasty.

In an effort to cut the budget deficit Italy has increased its tax burden, but it is still spread very unevenly and aggravated by fraud. Recently published statistics show that in almost every branch of the economy the employers, on average, declare a lower income than the employees. A friend, as we dine, gives an immediate example: The restaurant's owner cheats the state of taxes by fraudulently minimizing his profits, then lends the state that money at a high interest rate by buying bonds.

Italians are not against Social Security, or the unemployment insurance that made economic restructuring bearable, or even against subsidies for the South. What galls them is the unfair fashion in which the money is raised, the wasteful way it is used and, above all, the political channels through which it transits. Italy is now the only country in Western Europe in which the same party has been in power since World War II. As Parliament is elected through proportional representation and the D.C. gets only about a third of the vote, it has to govern with three or four allies; it even granted Craxi the premiership for more than three years—enough to whet his appetite. But the D.C. has never lost control.

This government by coalition has given birth to a complicated system of sharing the spoils. It affects not only the top *nomenklatura*, the control of TV channels and key jobs in the vast public sector. It also determines patronage down to the lowest level, the distribution of manna in the South or the misappropriation of funds after an earthquake. It is *clientelismo* developed into a fine art. It is not parliamentary democracy that the Italians are fed up with but the usurpation of power by the party machines. A successful film that should soon be seen in the United States—*Il Portaborse* (the briefcase carrier)—will give you an idea of what drives them mad.

The Scribbler and the Commissar

Nanni Moretti is a leading member of the new wave of neorealists in the Italian cinema. Moretti is the producer of *Il Portaborse* and its leading actor, playing the *onorevole* Botero, an unscrupulous Socialist minister. The other protagonist is the *portaborse* of the title, which could have been "the ghostwriter." He is a provincial high school *professore* whose gift for clever phrases wins him a post on the ministerial staff. With the job come the perks: His woman friend, also a teacher, is transferred to Rome; his family house, in need of repair, is declared a historic monument; he gets a trendy sports car. Yet after a brief spell in the job, he quits in a rage.

Admittedly, his minister is almost too bad to be true. Elected with the help of fraud, he makes money on the privatization of public property. He has never read a book, only introductions and conclusions. He cheats in the name of modernity and dismisses qualms of conscience as old hat. In his angry letter of resignation, the professor claims that the minister and his peers, far from being champions of modernity, are like feudal lords.

Yet such is Moretti's talent that Botero appears almost attractive or, rather, irresistible with his ability to turn everything to his advantage. At the end, after being re-elected, Botero does a TV interview at home, surrounded by his wife and children. And what does he say in his moment of triumph? He proclaims with great conviction: Our task is still unfinished, we must now turn our attention to the entrenched feudal lords.

Nowhere in the film is it specified that the minister is a Socialist, but everyone took it for granted, including the party itself, which dismissed Botero as a caricature. Undoubtedly the director, Daniele Luchetti, was not striving for subtlety, and the film has elements of farce. But many people see Craxi's party—"modern," Americanized and unscrupulous—as destroying, almost inexorably, the rich heritage of the Italian left.

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Bettino Is No General

The most sober description of the situation I heard came from a sophisticated observer of Italian affairs, a former labor leader who is now an independent senator elected with Communist backing. President Cossiga, he argued, can describe "gladiators"—that is, C.I.A. agents—as Italian patriots [see Singer, "The Gladiators," December 10, 1990]; he can vituperate against magistrates and attack the Constitution he is supposed to protect. But when he preaches for a presidential system, he is backed neither by his party nor by crucial members of the business establishment such as Fiat owner Gianni Agnelli. Cossiga's criticism of the parliamentary system may help Craxi's presidential ambitions, but without D.C. support, the latter cannot go very far.

My veteran analyst proceeds, as is now the fashion, by analogy with the recent French past. Craxi cannot do a de Gaulle: He has neither the general's charisma nor his track record. Nor can he rely on colonels from Algeria to bully Parliament. The Italian Constitution can be altered only by a two-thirds majority of the two houses combined in two successive votes. Support for his own party hovers between 15 and 20 percent, so even with the backing of the leagues and Italy's small fascist party (which also favors a stronger regime), he cannot even dream of such a figure.

In theory, Craxi should be able to do a Mitterrand—that is, win as the leader of a left-wing coalition. There is every indication that Achille Occhetto's P.D.S. would agree, however reluctantly, to be the junior partner in such an alliance. But the time factor makes this solution purely hypothetical. Mitterrand bided his time twenty-three years for his ultimate victory. Craxi's party, I am told, cannot afford to stay six months out of government; it is too dependent on patronage.

Granted that pressure can be exercised in other ways, notably through a referendum, one may hope to split the sprawling Christian Democracy. The European context, however, works against an antiparliamentary coup. Italy is now closely tied to the Common Market, and the European establishment would not put up with such an authoritarian nationalist outcome, my veteran expert concluded.

No Weimar, but . . .

Other friends disagree, notably those from *Il Manifesto*, a newspaper run by a group that was expelled from the C.P. because it refused to dismiss the 1968 Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia as merely an "error." They believe that such an optimistic reading of the future underestimates the degree to which Italian politics has been thrown out of balance by the decline and probable fall of the ex-Communist Party. While they obviously do not see renewed fascism on the horizon, they do think that the European establishment will be delighted if Italy, in turn, is normalized, with the power of Parliament greatly reduced.

A recent Italian newspaper headline declared that this would be "the first post-Yalta election." Indeed, domestic politics in Italy used to be viewed as a sort of "peaceful coexistence" between the D.C. and its allies and the Communists. True, the latter had long ceased to be a revolutionary force. Nevertheless, the party did still preserve a distinct

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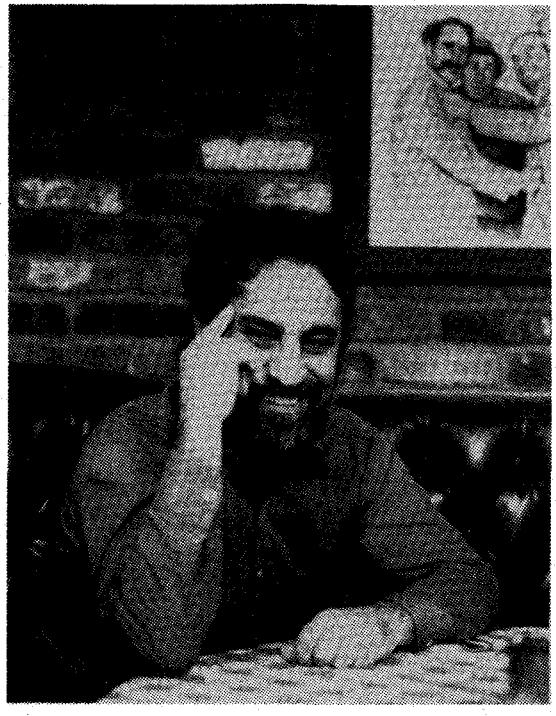

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culture, a memory of resistance, a vague belief in a radically different society. It is this capital that Occhetto and Craxi are now squandering with such indecent haste.

Faced with the slow but steady erosion of his party's electoral strength, Occhetto had a vision: If you can't beat them, join them. By changing the party's name and nature, he would win on the swings without losing on the roundabouts. But the opposite proved to be true. The party gained nothing on its right, while the breakaway left group, the Rifondazione Comunista, is much stronger than anyone predicted. Official figures tell the story. A year ago the C.P. still had more than 1.3 million members; the P.D.S. now claims 827,534. Even if one adds the 150,000 members of Rifondazione, the loss is considerable, and everything suggests it will be greater still at election time. There are efforts to preserve links between the Rifondazione and those leftists who stayed in the P.D.S. through clubs bearing the name of Berlinguer, Gramsci or Luxemburg. Optimists might argue that the P.D.S.'s slide will stop one day or that the Rifondazione will grow to become an alternative. But all this, at best, will be a long process. In the meantime, for the right, this is the moment to strike.

Craxi's scenario suffered a setback on June 9-10, when Italians were asked in a referendum to restrict the number of their "preferences" from four to one. Under proportional representation one votes for lists, and the system of preferences—candidates the voter marks as favorites—was originally designed to give him or her greater power. But it turned out that the mechanism helped only the party machines, the Mafia and fraud in general. In the South it favored the D.C. and the Socialists. In the referendum campaign the party lines were not clearly drawn. Nevertheless, the main Christian Democratic leaders pooh-poohed the event, while Craxi advised the voters to go to the beach rather than the polling stations. His hope was that the turnout would not reach the quorum of 50 percent of the electorate. As it turned out, 63 percent voted, and 96 percent of them said *Sì* to the reduction of preferences. Clearly Italians want more, not less, democracy. The problem is that this discontent, in the absence of a clear alternative, can easily be misdirected.

A Parting Shot

Termini is Rome's modern railway station, built just after the war. Outside, on a sunny Sunday, there is an impressive jam of buses and a host of foreigners—migrants from the Third World rather than European tourists. Inside, narrow-hipped men and women with wistful eyes, turbans and colorful robes add an exuberant African touch to the scene. I ask an Italian where they are from; his answer suggests that they are not welcomed by everyone.

How time flies. Twenty-five years ago I reported from Switzerland, which was then proportionately the heaviest importer of foreign labor. There, too, the immigrants tended to gather on Sunday at train stations. Only they were Italians. This change symbolizes the tremendous transformation of Italy within a quarter century. Now the birthplace of so many emigrants must learn to live with immigrant workers, and the process is far from smooth. As the progressive movement loses strength, racism raises its ugly head. Unless the left awakens soon from its current lethargy, the prospect for sunny Italy may be quite dark. That is the conclusion that runs through my head as the night train, the Palatino, takes me back to Paris. □

POPULISM AND THE PRESIDENCY

What Harkin May Herald

DAVID CORN

Successful presidential candidates usually have something in their background suitable for campaign hype—wartime feats, Communist chasing, Hollywood notoriety. Senator Tom Harkin, considering a run for the White House, would add a new category, human rights heroics. The unconventional image Harkin projects and his professed concern for underdogs are embodied in the stories that friends and supporters tell about his efforts against rights abuses, a subject not known for yielding elected officials much political capital.

In July 1970, the 30-year-old former Navy pilot then serving as an aide to a Congressional delegation visiting Vietnam escorted two lawmakers on a tour of Con Son prison. A Nixon Adminiministration official accompanying them predicted they would find the South Vietnamese institution to be "more like a Boy Scout recreational camp." The prison commander showed them inmates who proclaimed they were treated well. Then Harkin, using a map drawn by a former prisoner, directed the legislators to a small door by a vegetable garden. He knocked. The commander said the passageway was never used. But then a guard inside opened the door. The group rushed in and found about 250 men in "tiger cages"—small stone compartments with bars across the tops. Many of the caged men had been shackled for so long they could no longer walk. In an adjacent building, women were similarly being held. The inmates had been abused and poorly fed. Many were political prisoners.

The delegation barely mentioned the cages in its report. Harkin refused to give his boss the film he had shot of the cages and resigned. *Life* published the photographs, and the prisoners were eventually released. But Harkin was told he would never again work in Congress. Five years later he returned to Washington as a Democratic Representative from Iowa.

Not as good as being a fighter pilot in World War II? In 1976, while part of a delegation to Chile, Harkin learned that the military junta was running a secret interrogation center in what had been a disco. He enlisted an aide and went in search of the clandestine torture chamber. When they found the building, Harkin banged on the large wooden door. No one answered. He refused to leave. Forty minutes later a truck with soldiers pulled up, and the door opened. "Let's go," Harkin shouted, grabbing the aide and running in behind the truck. The pair was greeted by a dozen soldiers, who trained

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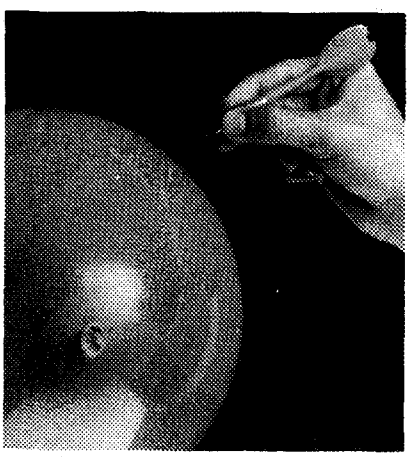

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guns on them and forced them out. But afterward the facility appeared on the regime's list of detention centers, and General Pinochet lost one easy way to "disappear" Chileans.

Few politicians can boast of outfoxing sadistic prison commanders or chasing foreign torturers. Few Democrats can boast of winning elections in Republican districts, of obtaining a Senate seat at the height of Reaganism, of being re-elected in a state that never before returned a Democratic Senator to office and of possessing populist credentials that, at least by Washington standards, are genuine. Tom Harkin can submit such claims. His combination of style (confrontational) and substance (solidly liberal with a focus on class-based economic issues) has propelled him to a prospective presidential candidacy that holds promise for the progressive wing of the inert Democratic Party.

Unlike his white rivals, Harkin wears the populist suit well—and has the history to pull it off.

Populism, for the moment, is in among the political cognoscenti, many of whom opportunistically pronounce it to be the only course of action for a Democrat to take against the Commander in Chief of Desert Storm. Jesse Jackson ran, in part, as a populist in 1988, but he has provided no clear indication of his plans for 1992. Representative Richard Gephardt and Senator Albert Gore, both potential Harkin rivals, flirted with populism last time out. And in the waning days of his pathetic campaign, Michael Dukakis desperately turned to what consultants call an "on-your-side" message. But those straitlaced politicians didn't wear the populist outfit well—and they didn't have the history to pull it off. On Harkin it fits.

Of all the would-be populists of 1992—you can add Governor Bill Clinton, Governor Mario Cuomo and Senator Jay Rockefeller to the list—only Harkin has a record in office that matches the rhetoric. In the past few years, he has called for bursting the income tax bubble that causes the marginal rate to drop for the wealthiest; for a surcharge on millionaires; for revising the S&L bailout so that the well-off pay more of the cost; for rewriting the budget agreement to free funds for social programs; for a post–cold war military budget that would repatriate billions of dollars now spent in Europe; and for a national health care system, perhaps resembling Canada's. In April he voted to cut the regressive Social Security payroll tax, and in May he voted against granting the President fast-track authority to negotiate a free-trade pact with Mexico, which is likely to cost U.S. jobs. Harkin's cry, says Representative Lane Evans, who co-chairs the Populist Caucus with Harkin, is "not to fine-tune the economy but to restructure it."

In stump speeches Harkins urges the Democratic Party "to get off its knees" and fight the "greed and selfishness of the Reagan/Bush/Quayle eighties." He cites statistics that show a growing disparity between the richest Americans and the rest of the nation. He assails the "gluttons of privilege." And he tells tales. He is not a fiery orator, but he draws artfully on his past. His father was a coal miner who during the Depression found work through a government jobs program, and Harkin joined construction crews to help pay for college. "We were poor," he says.

He also speaks passionately of his half-brother Frank, who lost his union job at an engine-parts factory during a strike in the 1970s. Frank, who is deaf, had worked there for twenty-three years. As Harkin puts it, the new owners of the factory, a faceless investment group, told his brother, "We used you up, depreciated you down. And now we're throwing you out. See that trash heap in back? That's where you belong."

What excites some of Washington's liberal crowd is that Harkin appeals to a number of camps within the Democratic Party. He is unabashedly pro-labor. His advocacy of family-farm legislation demonstrates a commitment to rural working-class interests, not corporate agriculture. He attracts the support of the "new politics" set—cause-oriented voters who care deeply about U.S. foreign policy, abortion, the environment, good government. He is a leader on human rights. As an upstart freshman in 1975 he won passage on the House floor of an amendment that attached human rights conditions to foreign aid. He opposed the *contra* war and continues to criticize U.S. policy in El Salvador. Last year he was the chief sponsor of the Americans with Disabilities Act, which prohibits discrimination against the handicapped. He is now pushing a bill that would allow the staff of federally funded clinics to discuss abortion with patients and would provide Medicaid coverage for abortions in cases of rape and incest. Such legislation, superseding recent Supreme Court rulings, would probably be vetoed by President Bush, and Harkin says he relishes the coming showdown.

Harkin is a rare Democrat, one whose liberalism carries over from social and foreign matters to domestic economics. "Tom transcends the cleavage in the party between these constituencies," says Senator Paul Wellstone, who is eager for a Harkin presidential bid. An open question is whether Harkin can appeal to the base supporters of the party's most prominent progressive, Jackson. Civil rights lobbyists in Washington count Harkin as a sure vote and a leader on their issues, but as an Iowan, Harkin has not had to campaign much among blacks and Latinos. And like any Democrat who wins the nomination, he would have to answer the likely Republican attacks regarding issues of race.

Harkin is not the perfect progressive. His human rights agenda has ignored Palestinians. While in the House, Harkin called for the Israelis to reopen the leading university in the West Bank and expressed concern for the cause of West Bank mayors who had been expelled by Israel. These actions earned him a sharp response from U.S. groups supporting the right-wing government of Israel. Since then, this champion of human rights, one of the Senate's top recipients of donations from pro-Israel PACs, has joined the Congressional majority that generally overlooks abuses in the occupied territories. Recently, *The Wall Street Journal* reported the troublesome

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news that Harkin owes a large personal debt to a powerhouse law and lobbying firm. Although he supports campaign finance reform, Harkin pulls in plenty of PAC contributions. Much of it comes from labor, some from liberal groups (Voters for Choice, Women's Action for Nuclear Disarmament). As chair of the influential appropriations subcommittee on labor, health and human services and education, he receives funds from health industry associations. He also banks donations from a few corporate interests, such as A.T.&T., General Electric, Martin Marietta.

Last year Harkin collected about $6 million for his re-election—more than his challenger, Representative Tom Tauke, raised in a race that was a high priority for the cash-endowed G.O.P. He also displayed a feistiness that no Democratic presidential nominee has exhibited in recent elections. When Tauke tried to exploit Harkin's opposition to a constitutional amendment to ban flag burning, Harkin's retort—Before wrapping yourself in the flag, you should first serve it—reminded voters that Tauke managed to duck military service during the Vietnam years. That closed the matter.

His political talents have won Harkin encouragement from conventional quarters of the Democratic Party. In June he appeared before IMPAC, a group of more than fifty funders, each of whom has raised at least $100,000 for the party. In 1988 most of this crowd, who made their fortunes in real estate, underwrote Al Gore. Nathan Landow, a developer who organized IMPAC, and many of his fellow fat cats were much taken with the Iowan. "He wouldn't let Bush get away with what was done to Dukakis," Landow notes. One IMPAC member told Wellstone that he was willing to help Harkin because Harkin is a fighter. Harkin's promise to bring home billions the United States spends to defend Europe found a responsive audience. Moreover, Landow left the meeting with the impression that Harkin cannot be labeled—or branded—a liberal: "He's for reducing taxes and making government smaller. He's for jobs, but he's pro-business. He emphasizes that he is a progressive Democrat. I like that, and everybody was comfortable with that." Tim Raftis, who managed Harkin's campaign last year and is involved in the nascent Harkin presidential effort, also wants to avoid the L-word: "You can't put Tom Harkin in a box and say he's a lefty liberal. He's not. He's a straight-talking common-sense fighter for the common folks."

If Harkin is not a liberal, it's hard to say who is. He is for reducing taxes, but those on the middle class and poor. He favors raising the tax bills of Landow and his IMPAC gang. He is pro-business but not automatically so: National policies, he says, should encourage the development of a skilled, productive and well-paid workforce, which will help companies compete internationally. Some in IMPAC maintain that they are merely looking for a candidate who can win and who will increase spending on housing, roads and other capital expenditures. Harkin certainly fits the latter part of this bill. Moreover, he does not practice the whining, defeatist, take-your-castor-oil liberalism of Dukakis or Walter Mondale. But to most corporate-class Democratic Party funders, Harkin poses a threat. The party's slavish ties to funders—whether they be special-interest PACs or wealthy individuals—partly explains its failure to present a stark alternative to the G.O.P. "The Democratic Party has become dependent on lots of the special interests that favor Republican-type policies," Evans observes. "People within it are unwilling to alienate funders." But Evans claims Harkin has the will to resist pandering to this influential audience. Harkin's ability to draw funds from labor and issue-oriented donors—candidates with passionate themes usually can do well in mail solicitations—might reduce the pain of such resistance.

If Americans are fed up with politics-as-usual, cynical about the government's handling of serious concerns such as the S&L crisis and worried about the nation's economic health, Harkin is well positioned to tap those sentiments. Of all the possible candidates, with the exception of Jackson, he is most capable of running a let's-stir-things-up campaign. In Iowa, he occasionally takes off his politician's suit for a "work day," which he spends at a construction site, nurse's aide station or assembly line. In a national race, he could send a message by taking his campaign off the main roads. Wellstone suggests that when Harkin treks to contributor-rich California with cup in hand, he should also visit the barrios and other places where few candidates go politicking. He might steal a piece of Jackson's strategy by combining campaigning with a voter registration effort.

So can Harkin win? He has as good a chance at the nomination as any candidate. Only the entrance of Cuomo or Jackson would cause him much trouble. He can raise enough money to compete against almost anyone in the prospective field aside from a self-funded Rockefeller. He has the requisite drive and the ability to rouse those who pick the Democratic candidate. As a nominee, Harkin, if he fought the urge to veer to the center, would at least present an unclouded choice. Harkin, Evans maintains, would demonstrate that the

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Democratic Party is not a "copycat" of the Republicans and should not be written off. He may be assailed for his opposition to going to war in the gulf. Harkin pressed the Democratic leadership to schedule a vote on the war; since the war's end he hasn't said much about it, but his past suggests he can defend his position and strike back. Because expectations of the Democrats are so low, Harkin need not beat Bush to make his point. A credible but not victorious Harkin campaign might well bolster the ongoing progressive challenge to the party, which, until now, has been Jackson's turf.

Harkin says he will decide sometime around Labor Day whether to run. He is already raising initial funds and enlisting staff in New Hampshire, whose primary would be the first big test. For years, progressives have sought that mythic coalition of labor, middle-class families, cause-oriented voters, minorities and the disfranchised. Harkin has potential to connect with parts of all these blocs. He meets several criteria for a viable national candidate: He has an engaging personal story, a clear-cut message and the ability to convey both with conviction. If Democrats really want to test the proposition that a Middle American populist can lead them back into the White House, they won't find anyone on Capitol Hill or in the nation's statehouses better suited for such a long-awaited experiment. □

Quayle

(*Continued From Front Cover*)

chaired by Henry Waxman of California.

Quayle has President Bush to thank for his promotion from figurehead to behind-the-scenes Washington player. Just ten years ago Bush himself, as the new Vice President, became chair of Ronald Reagan's Task Force on Regulatory Relief, the job that serves as the model for Quayle's. In fact, Bush pioneered the concept of a Vice President who serves as a representative of regulated industries in Washington. Bush initiated the practice of secret negotiations with industry and was extremely effective in scaling down, particularly at the E.P.A., regulations that companies considered burdensome. After two years, he announced he had cut regulatory costs by more than $150 billion over a ten-year period.

Now it's Quayle's turn, and his pre-emptive power is so considerable that he can overrule heads of agencies like E.P.A. Administrator William Reilly. The sweeping nature of Quayle's demands comes through in a memorandum he sent to the heads of agencies and departments on March 22. "At a cabinet meeting last summer," Quayle wrote, "President Bush asked the Council on Competitiveness to oversee the regulatory review process. . . . I appreciate your help to make sure that [this] process operates to minimize the burden on the economy of all federal regulations." Henceforth, he said, heads of agencies were to send his reviewers any "documents announcing or implementing regulatory policy that affects the public." That meant not only drafts of new regulations but also "strategy statements, policy manuals, grant and loan procedures . . . press releases."

An April 12 report prepared by the staff of OMB Watch, an activist organization in Washington headed by Gary Bass, said that Quayle's memo "caused widespread confusion among federal agencies." As observers of White House influence on government agencies, the staff members of OMB Watch said that the Quayle council "implicitly reserves the right to review [agency policy]—a factor that will inevitably further politicize agency activities. . . . [The memo] raises the issue of whether the Council intends to take up the role the [Bush] Task Force once played—again acting as a conduit to industry. Council staff have indicated that they hope to solicit and receive comments from those affected by regulatory actions, leaving the door open for them to court industry and business interests."

Quayle's handling of a new E.P.A. regulation that sets limits on a major source of air pollution—the 34,000 chemical plants, oil refineries, factories and power plants owned by large companies—illustrates his style. This regulation, as written at the E.P.A., allowed the companies to make minimal increases in their pollution emissions in emergency situations. One of the companies whose officers thought the emergency increases weren't big enough was Eli Lilly and Company, a large pharmaceutical manufacturer in Indianapolis and a generous contributor to Quayle's Senate campaigns. David McAvoy, a Lilly attorney, said in a February 28 letter to the E.P.A. that his company needed more "operational flexibility" to anticipate a sudden need to produce essential drugs. Thomas Carr, a vice president of the Motor Vehicle Manufacturers Association, asked the agency on March 28 for the same concessions for his industry.

The E.P.A. rejected both requests. However, on April 6 David McIntosh of Quayle's staff sent a list of "suggested changes" to the agency. It included the emergency increases desired by Lilly and the auto industry. Obviously, the companies had quietly appealed the E.P.A. turndown to Quayle. That's the way Quayle operates, said an investigator for Representative Waxman: "E.P.A. says no because it's illegal, and the memo comes over from the vice president's office with the exact changes in it." These were by no means minor revisions. According to Waxman, the changes allow all the regulated companies to rewrite their own permits to allow unlimited increases in pollution—"double, triple or a hundredfold." The companies need only notify state environmental agencies, and if they don't hear from them in seven days the increases will be locked in. Anyone who has ever dealt with a government agency knows it can take at least seven days for a letter to land on the right desk. E.P.A. Administrator Reilly was obliged to go along with Quayle's changes.

Obviously Quayle and his staff aren't qualified to evaluate or revise these sorts of regulations, a task that requires expert knowledge of pollution-control technology and of the effects of pollutants on the human body. Neither are the men and women at the Office of Management and Budget's Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, who review the regulations for Quayle and whose specialties are in such areas as

Jim Sibbison, a correspondent for The Lancet, *was an E.P.A. press officer.*

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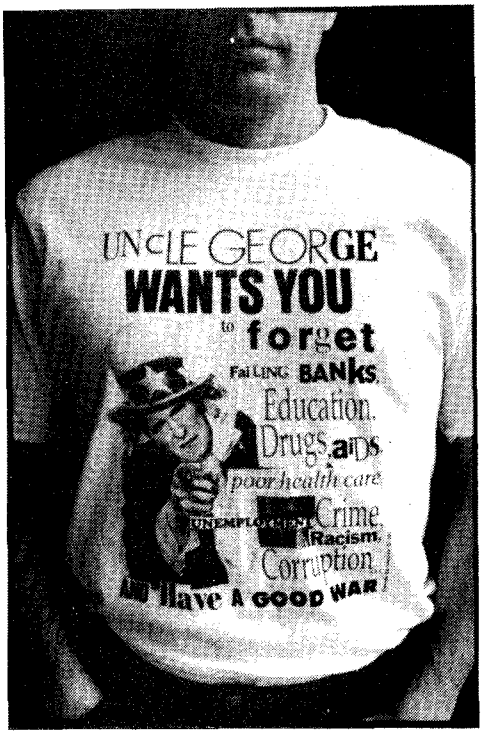

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economics, public administration and law. Quayle and his staff, perforce, must rely on the environmental perspectives of industry's experts.

So attuned are Quayle's reviewers to management's wishes that public backing for a regulation has been cited as a reason to oppose it. The E.P.A.'s Reilly, for example, had proposed requiring municipal incinerator operators to set aside 25 percent of their paper, plastics and other waste for recycling instead of burning them. At the top of a list of objections to the rule, a reviewer for Quayle listed the suspicion that the E.P.A. had proposed the rule "primarily because recycling has enormous popular support."

Another reviewer let slip whom the Quayle council consults for advice. "Industry contacts," reported the critic, say "recycling costs are often underestimated." Big business had its reasons for opposing this regulation: Companies like Waste Management Inc., Browning-Ferris Industries, Ford Motor Company and Bechtel Corporation are involved in various aspects of incineration; the reduction in incineration required by the E.P.A. rule would cause a reduction in profit. So Quayle killed it, on the ground that the costs outweighed the benefits, offering no supporting evidence. For the same reason, and again without proof, he rejected the E.P.A.'s proposal to ban incineration of lead batteries; the rule had been designed primarily to protect the health of children.

When he signed the new Clean Air Act last November, President Bush called it "the centerpiece of our environmental agenda" and "simply the most significant air pollution legislation in our nation's history." Actually, White House and industry lobbyists had severely weakened the law by obtaining concessions to polluters. Now Quayle is passing out more of them at the back door.

The E.P.A. air-pollution program is just the start of

Quayle's agenda. He and his industry contacts will be tackling such other E.P.A. problems as ocean pollution from oil facilities, controls on radioactive waste and regulations of lead in drinking water. Not just the E.P.A. but almost the entire regulatory apparatus is Quayle's province. Likely priority targets are other health agencies such as the Food and Drug Administration and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration.

Waxman believes that Quayle's operation is "flagrantly illegal," and even to an outsider it has a furtive look about it. No law gives Quayle the right to veto or undercut a pollution-control program mandated by Congress; there is no Congressional oversight of his council and no way of knowing what transpires in the council's communications with the regulated companies. Quayle even refused to send a representative to testify at the Waxman hearings on the council. (My call to Quayle's office requesting an interview was not returned.) The only legal rationale for his operation is contained in two executive orders signed by President Reagan in 1981 and 1985. The purpose of these orders, as stated in the preamble, was to "insure well-reasoned regulations." That sounded innocuous, but a Library of Congress study concluded after Reagan signed the first order that he had exceeded his authority in issuing it.

Still, Quayle's council looks unstoppable. Government back-room collaboration with regulated companies, introduced a decade ago by Bush as routine procedure at the White House's Office of Management and Budget, now seems to be fully institutionalized in spite of efforts in Congress to control it. The council membership alone shows the importance Bush attaches to it: John Sununu, White House Chief of Staff; Dick Thornburgh, Attorney General; Nicholas Brady, Secretary of the Treasury; Michael Boskin, Council of Economic Advisers chair; Richard Darman, O.M.B. director; and Robert Mosbacher, Secretary of Commerce.

A key man in Quayle's deregulation scheme is C. Boyden Gray, presidential counsel to Bush. Gray now heads a Quayle working group on regulatory policy, and his White House/industry connections go back to the early 1980s, when he was counsel to the Reagan task force. At that time Gray developed a hit list of regulations destined for oblivion in what became known in Washington as the "black hole."

All this top-level attention to deregulation likely portends improved political prospects for Quayle. Until Bush entrusted him with his new assignment, Quayle had no specific task that could demonstrate his presidential qualifications. Now he has one. Ability to please corporate campaign contributors is an important item on any presidential candidate's résumé.

If that is a measure, Quayle's record is outstanding. Business executives are his natural constituency. As he once told a country club gathering of contributors to his Senate campaign, he considers them part of his "family," sharing, as he does, their values and philosophy. Getting along with campaign contributors is essential, but, if he aspires to the presidency, Quayle needs to demonstrate other talents as a national leader. That may be difficult. So far, his experience in Bush's domestic program appears to be largely limited to undercutting safeguards that protect public health. □

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BOOKS & THE ARTS.

Fighting for the West

ERIC FONER AND
JON WIENER

"The West as America: Reinterpreting Images of the Frontier, 1820–1920," an exhibit at the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of American Art, has become the latest target in the assault on "politically correct" thought by longtime conservatives, onetime radicals and academics enamored of campus life before the advent of large numbers of women and minority students. Critics accusing this show of being "P.C." have once again wrapped themselves in the mantle of intellectual liberalism, while accusing their opponents of political indoctrination and thought control [see Alexander Cockburn, "Beat the Devil," May 27 and June 24]. But at the Smithsonian, as on most college campuses, abuses inspired by political correctness remain a minor problem. Their significance is dwarfed by the myriad real crises in university and cultural life—among them dwindling public funds, rising corporate influence, the fragmentation of scholarship and widespread illiteracy. "Political correctness" ranks with the swine flu epidemic and comet Kohoutek as molehills transformed into mountains by a gullible media. The Smithsonian controversy suggests that it is the right, not the left, that today poses the real threat to intellectual freedom.

Senator Ted Stevens, the Alaska Republican, made the Smithsonian show a national issue in a Senate Appropriations Committee hearing in May, when he accused the museum of advancing a leftist political agenda and threatened to cut the institution's budget in retaliation. "You're in for a battle," he told Smithsonian officials. Washington Republican Senator Slade Gorton echoed the charge. (Stevens later acknowledged that he had not, in fact, seen the show. What prompted his crusade was a well-publicized remark by former Librarian of Congress Daniel Boorstin in the museum's comment book that the exhibit was "perverse, historically inaccurate, [and] destructive.")

The press quickly entered the fray. *The Washington Post*'s Ken Ringle called the show "the most cynical exhibit . . . ever presented under the aegis of your tax dollars and mine." *The New York Times*'s senior art critic, Michael Kimmelman, blasted the show's "simplistic" and "forced" analyses. The wildest attack came from political columnist Charles Krauthammer: The exhibit, he wrote, had "a crude half-baked Marxist meanness"; it could have appeared "thirty years ago in Moscow."

The West's development was not simple heroic progress: American history contains many Wests, all more or less 'invented.'

Those who actually visit "The West as America" may well be disappointed to discover that the exhibit is decidedly unscandalous. It begins with a seemingly unexceptional premise: that nineteenth-century paintings do not simply record Western "reality." Instead, as a wall label states, they are "products of convention" rooted in the dominant ideologies of their time. Of course, placing the work of artists in historical context is hardly a new idea. What the critics object to is the nature of the historical interpretation presented in tandem with these particular works of art.

In most assaults on "political correctness," the bogyman is "multiculturalism"—the movement to expand subjects like history and literature to include the experiences of previously neglected groups. Critics of "The West as America," however, are after larger game—nothing less than an entire interpretation of the American past. What they want is the kind of relentlessly celebratory account of American development so common in the 1950s. To Krauthammer, the show expresses "contempt for every achievement of Western expansion"; the *Post*'s Ringle complained that the show "trashes . . . most of our national history."

Scholars may be excused for finding this somewhat tendentious. As Patricia Nelson Limerick of the University of Colorado at Boulder, a leading historian of the West, puts it, "This show is about as revolutionary as if you had a Southern history exhibit, hung romantic paintings of plantations, and then said slavery was a rough business—not a very wild proposition, and the same kind of proposition this show offers about the West."

Limerick, of course, knows full well that a heroic vision of the West retains a powerful hold on the American imagination. She and others founded the "New Western History," which has transformed our understanding of the region over the past decade or so [see Sarah J. Stage, "Tales of the New West," October 22, 1990]. These scholars have hammered the final nail into the coffin of Frederick Jackson Turner's "frontier thesis," which saw westward expansion as a mystical social process in which European culture was stripped away by settlers' encounter with nature. On the frontier emerged the quintessential American, cut free from the European past and devoted to individualism, democracy and equality.

In the New Western History, the West is not a process but a place—a place inhabited by people, not just nature, and fought over by a multi-ethnic cast of characters including Easterners, Mexicans, Native Americans and blacks. The conquest of the West is a story of success and failure, heroism and betrayal, capitalist triumph and labor exploitation. Colorado miners and Mexican peons are as much a part of the story as pioneers on the Oregon Trail. In other words, the West's development was a complex history, not a simple heroic progress.

Howard Lamar, the Yale historian whose work inspired much of this new history, writes in the exhibition catalogue that the West has always been "a place to project wishes and dreams," and that in so doing, Americans "reveal themselves and their own ideologies." American history contained many Wests, all more or less "invented," all different from the prosaic and intermittently violent reality of white settlement and Native American dispossession. At the Constitutional Convention, Madison argued that the West could save America from Old World class

Eric Foner is DeWitt Clinton Professor of History at Columbia University and co-curator of the Chicago Historical Society's exhibition "A House Divided." Jon Wiener is professor of history at the University of California, Irvine, and a contributing editor of The Nation.

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conflict. Half a century later Horace Greeley saw it as a safety valve for oppressed Eastern workers. The doctrine of Manifest Destiny held that the West would fulfill America's divinely ordained role as savior of the world. Economic writers often viewed the West as a passage to India, a route by which America could dominate trade with the Far East. Today, it seems, the New World Order requires a West free of exploitation, racism and other inconvenient realities of American life.

That the West has always existed in the imagination as much as in reality is the theme of the Smithsonian show. *The Washington Post* declared it "curious" that "the art and the arguments of the show's organizers tend to operate at cross-purposes." But that is precisely the show's message. The nineteenth- and early twentieth-century paintings on display celebrated the conquest of the West. The accompanying wall labels challenge viewers not to take the paintings at face value, but to reinterpret them in terms of what historians have come to understand about Western expansion.

The show emphasizes that artists painted the West to conform to the expectations of Easterners, especially wealthy patrons of the arts and railroad companies interested in promoting Western settlement and tourism. Easterners wanted to see a West more honest and clean, more stirring and uplifting, than their own troubled region, suffering in the late nineteenth century from periodic depressions and violent class conflict. The paintings promised settlers a peaceful journey to fertile lands, and the artists paid special attention to "the triumphs of engineering"—railroads, bridges, etc. The wall texts take note of what the paintings left out: abandoned homesteads and mining towns that went bust; social conflict and environmental damage.

Often, artists portrayed the West as if it were entirely uninhabited. When they did depict Native Americans, much of their work tended to be stereotypical. The exhibition section "Inventing the Indian" has turned out to be one of the most controversial. These paintings, the much-maligned wall text declares, "tell more about the feelings and ideas of artists and patrons than about the 'Indians' whose lives they represent." Early in the nineteenth century, Native Americans were portrayed as noble savages; later, as they were being driven off their land, they were portrayed as violent aggressors (even though they were usually the victims of aggression). Later still, the "doomed Indian" (representing the fantasy that the whole problem might be eliminated by Indians simply dying out) and the acculturated Indian became prominent themes.

The final room, on early-twentieth-century painters, also aroused considerable ire. One guide who has taken groups around the museum reported that while many visitors accept the idea that paintings of Indians are not entirely "accurate," they nevertheless become irate when presented with the idea that the West may not have "really" been the way Frederic Remington painted it.

There is a deep strain of anti-intellectualism and provincialism just beneath the surface of the assault on 'political correctness.'

Nor do they appreciate being confronted by Remington's racism. "Jews—inguns—chinamen—Italians—Huns—" he wrote, were "the rubish of the earth I hate." In the same letter to a friend, he boasted, "I've got some Winchesters and when the massacreing begins . . . I can get my share of 'em and whats more I will." It does not seem entirely farfetched to speculate, as the wall text does, that Remington's painting *Fight for the Water Hole*, in which some tough-looking Texans defend themselves from Comanche attack, may have been colored by these prejudices. And when the work is placed in the context in which it was painted—America in 1903, thirty years after the event it portrayed—it can be viewed as an allegory in which a native-born white elite is surrounded by menacing and uncivilized immigrants. But Krauthammer ridiculed those interpretations, describing the painting as simply "a classic cowboys vs. Indians gunfight," and *The Washington Post*'s Ringle approvingly quoted an assertion that it portrays nothing more or less than "the truth . . . basic reportage."

Critics also objected to the museum's interpretation of *The Captive*, by Irving Crouse, which portrays a helpless young white woman in a flowing white dress, her hands and feet tied, lying unconscious at the feet of an Indian warrior, who quietly stares at her. The wall text suggests that the painting expresses white culture's "fears of miscegenation," which aroused a storm of protest from, among others, *The New York Times* and *Newsweek*, both of which ran reproductions of the painting. The warrior's arrows, on the ground, point at the helpless woman, suggesting a sinister version of Cupid; the catalogue interpreted the arrows as phallic symbols, an idea critics dismissed with contempt.

The painting's sexual imagery is ambiguous, but the critics seem most offended not by the museum's Freudianism (hardly a new idea, even in Stevens's Alaska) but by any effort to interpret a work of art. Krauthammer's argument that Remington painted only "a classic cowboys vs. Indians gunfight" falls into this category. This view reveals the deep strain of anti-intellectualism and provincialism that lies just beneath the surface of the assault on "political correctness."

Some of the show's wall texts are, indeed, didactic—a common failing in museum prose—but the critics are upset by its substance, not just its style. Rather than criticism, however, the exhibition curators deserve praise for the extensive archival work that has enabled them to place these mostly mediocre and forgotten paintings in a historical context. The show includes Henry Farny's 1902 portrait of Ogallala Fire in full warrior regalia. However, as Alex Nemerov's catalogue essay reports, Ogallala Fire was at that time not a warrior on the plains but a janitor in the Cincinnati Art Club. "The hand that erstwhile wielded the tomahawk and scalping knife now handles the broom and dustpan," Farny wrote.

What the catalogue calls "the hopeless separation of Western artists from the era they sought to document" was evident in other cases. A revealing photo of Charles Schreyvogel at work shows him at his easel, in front of a cowboy who crouches as he aims his revolver. They are on the roof of an apartment building in Hoboken, New Jersey, in 1903. Schreyvogel actually went to Colorado to sketch Pike's Peak in 1911; he wrote home to his wife, "I started [sketching] with Pike's Peak in the back ground and it looked fine. I was there at 7:30 a.m. Then the smelters started in and the black smoke just covered the whole valley so that I couldn't see a thing and had to stop." Of course, in his paintings the Western landscape always

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appears luminous and pristine—a West of the imagination rather than reality.

Although Senators Stevens and Gorton, and many Eastern critics, are outraged by the New Western History, in the West itself the regional political establishment has a different view. Increasingly, it welcomes the new history for its emphasis on the region's diversity of peoples and experiences. The Western Governors' Association invited Limerick and other practitioners of the new history to speak at their conference last summer, and has published a collection of essays on new ways of looking at the region's past, *Beyond the Mythic West*. (The first essay was written by former Secretary of the Interior Stewart Udall.) "Inside the beltway is a special place," Limerick argues, "a place where Western senators dress up as quaint prospectors. But if that exhibit had come to Denver it would get nowhere near the amount of whining it did in D.C."

"The West as America," however, will not travel to Denver. Previously scheduled appearances at the art museums there and in St. Louis have now been canceled. Both museums plead a shortage of funds rather than fear of political controversy, but surely if the exhibit had received the praise it deserved rather than a politically inspired assault, money would have been found to bring the show west.

Despite fears that "The West as America" reflects yet another takeover of a cultural institution by 1960s radicals, Senator Stevens can rest assured that the Smithsonian is no hotbed of political correctness. Most of the exhibitions in its complex of museums are thoroughly conventional. The National Air and Space Museum is nothing more than a celebration of American greatness; it must warm Professor Boorstin's heart. In the Ceremonial Court of the National Museum of American History, the visitor can view ball gowns of the last seven first ladies—with no embarrassing mention of the scandal over Nancy Reagan's requisitioning of hundreds of thousands of dollars' worth of "gifts" from the world's top designers. Nearby is a display of presidential memorabilia: Wilson's golf clubs, Cleveland's trout flies, Harding's riding crop; no Freudian interpretation, no historical context, no mention of Wilson's Red Scare, Cleveland's economic depression or Harding's sexual escapades; just a reliquary.

Indeed, critics of "The West as America" will be delighted to find in the National Museum of American History the show "Westward to Promontory," presenting photos of the building of the transcontinental railroad. Here, the labels are wholly celebratory of "the great enterprise of the nineteenth century." The theme is the triumph of capitalism and the reknitting of the post-Civil War Union, with barely a mention of exploited Chinese laborers or dispossessed Indians, and none at all of the struggle over Reconstruction taking place at the same time.

The Smithsonian, according to one staff member who preferred to remain anonymous, is "the most reactionary place I've ever been. It's anything but liberal." Nonetheless, Stevens's threats have had a chilling effect on an already conservative institution. Curators have changed some of the wall texts for "The West as America" to soften the impact. The changes have not been extensive—five rewritten labels and five new ones out of a total of fifty-five, according to exhibition curator William Truettner. Many of the changes were made in the section "Inventing the Indian." One label no longer states that Indians were considered "racially and culturally inferior." Apparently in response to the complaint that the show has nothing good to say about the paintings, another now credits them with "valuable ethnographic detail."

Truettner insists that the changes were planned before Stevens launched his assault—although they were not executed until the political controversy began. He admits that curators in the future will have to be more "careful" about labels that may offend powerful interests. His observation is reinforced by reports from other Smithsonian employees, speaking off the record, that labels for future shows are being edited to avoid provoking right-wing senators or the White House.

Another example of the chill emanating from Stevens's office can be found at the Hirshhorn Museum, which took the unusual step of posting a warning that visitors "may find disturbing" some of the work in the Awards in the Visual Arts exhibit that opened there in June. The Hirshhorn is part of the Smithsonian, and its curators worried especially about a piece by Adrian Piper depicting a lynching. A museum spokesperson said the warning was posted because of the "climate," which *The Washington Post* took to be a reference to Stevens's threat.

The attack on "The West as America" comes after *The New Republic*, *Newsweek*, *Time*, *New York* magazine

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and others have blasted away at the campus left, portraying it as "thought police" out to destroy intellectual freedom. Dinesh D'Souza's *Illiberal Education* has reached the best-seller list, arguing as Roger Kimball did in a similar book that "tenured radicals" now control the universities and suppress freedom of speech with tactics that "border on the totalitarian." President Bush himself recently joined the chorus. These laments, however, ring a bit hollow when one reflects that none of these self-proclaimed opponents of censorship have uttered a word of protest against a senator's threat to cut the Smithsonian budget because he dislikes an exhibition's interpretation of American history.

The Smithsonian, it seems certain, will ride out this storm, but the controversy over "The West as America" is a harbinger of more trouble to come. The museum world, like academia, has lately been changing in ways many conservatives find deeply threatening. Long devoted simply to collecting and displaying memorabilia of prominent men and emblems of American greatness, museums are now seeking to present a more complex, diversified and critical portrait of the American past.

The Chicago Historical Society, for example, recently dismantled its Lincoln Gallery, complete with his top hat, ice skate and pieces of wood from his log cabin, and replaced it with an exhibit emphasizing the centrality of slavery and racism in nineteenth-century American history. Richmond's Valentine Museum currently displays a pioneering exhibition on "Jim Crow: Racism and Reaction in the New South." The Museum of the Confederacy in Richmond recently opened a major show on slavery, a far cry from its usual preoccupation with Robert E. Lee, Stonewall Jackson and the Lost Cause. (For reviews of similarly innovative exhibits, see Edward Chappell, "Museums," July 17, 1989, and December 18, 1989.)

"The West as America" is part of this development and represents a significant achievement for the Museum of American Art. We need more shows like this—exhibits that bring forgotten paintings back to life as documents of social and cultural history. Since most of these mediocre genre paintings and banal landscapes long ago lost their status as art, today they are viewed by few people outside the Buffalo Bill Historical Center or the Cowboy Hall of Fame. This exhibition has given us a new way to see them: as images that convey white Americans' obsessive preoccupation with their country's virtue. The Smithsonian, unfortunately, now plans to close this show July 28; it's too bad it can't remain open longer.

All these new exhibits offend some viewers, who go to museums for "old-fashioned" history. But they are appreciated by many others. At "The West as America," the visitors' comment book is filled with perceptive remarks; not everyone wants an exhibit about the West where never is heard a discouraging word. "Where's the paintings the Indians did of the whites?" asks one visitor, a legitimate question. Some comments are sharply critical, but more are rather favorable. "This exhibit," one visitor wrote, "helps me think about the art, the artists, the patrons, the audience, the subjects. Thanks." Is it possible that ordinary people actually appreciate being challenged by new ideas? Senator Stevens, please take note. □

The Reserve Army

ALEX KEYSSAR

IMPATIENT ARMIES OF THE POOR: The Story of Collective Action of the Unemployed, 1808–1942. *By Franklin Folsom. University Press of Colorado. 558 pp. $35.*

One of the most disturbing features of the current recession is the eerie silence that has enveloped the problem of unemployment. While pundits dicker about the significance of minor statistical shifts (does the June increase from 6.9 to 7 percent really mean that there is more unemployment?), little mention is made of the bald and extremely significant fact that at least 7 million Americans were unemployed during each month of the fall, winter and spring. Just who those jobless workers are and how they are getting by would seem to be a matter of some import, particularly since most of them are not receiving any unemployment insurance benefits. But the issue gets little attention. In May, to cite one example, the only articles *The New York Times* ran about unemployment were schematic reports of the government's statistics.

The press and the middle class, however, have not been alone in their silence: Remarkably little has been heard from the unemployed themselves. Where are the protests, the rallies, the marches on Washington? The enraged outbursts? The petitions even? Despite the pain—and injustice—of being jobless in the land of plenty, of being needy in a nation that can produce Stealth bombers and protect distant emirs, the (now) 8 million men and women who are out of work have remained largely invisible and inaudible.

The silence, to be sure, is not without precedent. Most of the unemployed, throughout American history, have reacted to their joblessness privately rather than publicly, individually rather than collectively. The reasons for this are many. The experience of joblessness has always been a psychologically dispiriting one, inhibiting rather than encouraging militant behavior; the targets and goals of any possible collective action are far from obvious (in contrast, for example, to those of a strike); and the unemployed, like all workers, have had to contend with sometimes divisive differences of race, ethnicity, religion, gender and occupation.

More important, "the unemployed," despite the implications of the label, have rarely, if ever, constituted a socially distinct or coherent group. Unemployment is almost always a temporary condition, even if it lasts for months, and consequently the population of the unemployed is always changing. Those who were jobless in January are not necessarily jobless in April; at any given moment, the reserve army of labor includes men and women who have been jobless for a week as well as workers who have been jobless for six months or more. Not an easy group to organize.

Still, as Franklin Folsom reminds us, there has been a long tradition of protest by the unemployed in the United States. As early as 1808, there were demonstrations by "jack tars" who were deprived of work by a government embargo. And during every industrial depression of the nineteenth century, some workers engaged in collective action to protest against and try to remedy their condition. Similarly, the first third of the twentieth century witnessed periodic mass protests by jobless workers, culminating, of course, in the diverse movements of the unemployed that emerged during the Great Depression.

Folsom, indeed, participated in those

Alex Keyssar teaches American history at Duke University and has written extensively about the history of unemployment.

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movements, spending nearly two years in the mid-1930s editing newspapers for the Unemployed Council, a large and militant national organization that was supported by the Communist Party, among others. By his own account, he has been at work on this book ever since, at least during those moments when he "was not working for a living." *Impatient Armies of the Poor* is thus both a history and an expression of dedication to a cause. Although Folsom does not describe his own activities within the Unemployed Council, he movingly narrates some of his initial contacts with the jobless, when he was assigned the task of interviewing applicants for Civil Works Administration positions. The tales told by those unemployed workers made Folsom weep, focusing his activism during the Depression and eventually giving rise to this book.

Impatient Armies is a detailed, anecdotal history of collective action by, and on behalf of, the unemployed from the early nineteenth century to the beginning of World War II. The book describes the demonstrations of unemployed workers in the cities of the Northeast (with particular and appropriate emphasis on New York), as well as in Chicago and the far West. It chronicles, and places in context, well-known episodes such as the march of Coxey's Army to the capital in the 1890s and the bonus and hunger marches of the 1930s. At the same time, it rescues from obscurity accounts of smaller, more local, yet in many respects equally important political events, such as the militant rallies of the unemployed in Tompkins Square in New York City in 1857 and in 1874. The stories are generally dramatic and colorful; all too often, they include moments of startling state violence against the unemployed and their backers.

Inescapably, *Impatient Armies* is also a chronicle of the efforts made by radicals, of very diverse stripes, to organize the unemployed. When depressions hit the urban centers of the United States, the unemployed were mobilized not by Democrats or Republicans (both parties remained on the sidelines until after World War I) but by socialists, anarchists and syndicalists. The history of collective action by the unemployed, thus, is also something of a pageant of the American left: In different places, at different times, the jobless were organized and led by the Spring Street Council (an expelled section of the First International), the Socialist Labor Party, the Industrial Workers of the World, the Socialist Party and the Communist Party. Among the actors who appear in the drama are Emma Goldman, Ben Reitman, Dennis Kearney (who organized the unemployed before organizing against the Chinese), Jack London, Frank Tannenbaum (who organized the unemployed before becoming a professor at Columbia), Urbain Ledoux, Helen Keller, Hosea Hudson, Lucy Parsons, A.J. Muste and more, many more. Not surprisingly, given both the historical record and the author's personal experience, the accounts of organizing in the 1930s are particularly rich and detailed. Noteworthy too are the numerous photographs and documents reproduced in the text and appendixes.

In its tone and intent, this is a heroic and even optimistic history, a narrative of the struggles of oppressed people and their progressive allies against social injustice. Moreover, as Folsom structures the tale (and I think his interpretations are, on the whole, accurate), this is a story of progress, not of outright victory but of limited gains achieved through decades of activity. What the unemployed were demanding, from the early nineteenth century through the 1930s, was, most commonly, government intervention, public sector activity of varied types to compensate for the failures of private enterprise.

And by the early 1940s (when Folsom draws his story to a close), government intervention, on the state and federal levels, had become widespread. The federal government had assumed significant responsibility for the problem of unemployment, an insurance system was in place and major precedents had been established for large-scale public works programs during depressions. As Folsom makes clear, the problem was far from being solved, but substantial gains had been made and institutionalized. Those achievements, the author reminds us, would not have been possible without the "impatient armies" of jobless workers who marched, rallied and protested during and before the Depression.

From the perspective of the 1990s, however, the gains posted earlier in this century seem less solid, less permanent than they did ten or twenty years ago. The government may have assumed formal responsibility for the problem of unemployment, but it has repeatedly backed away from full employment as a political and economic objective. The target of a

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3 or 4 percent unemployment rate, so widely proclaimed in the 1950s and 1960s, has completely vanished from mainstream debate, and much-listened-to economists build models to demonstrate how costly it would be to have too *little* unemployment. The past decade has witnessed what may be a long-term rise in the unemployment rate, while the proportion of jobless workers covered by insurance has fallen precipitately. One of the best-kept secrets in our kinder, gentler "welfare state" is that most of the unemployed do not receive any benefits at all.

What this suggests is not simply that the New Deal can be (or is being) rolled back or that the government's assumption of responsibility for the problem is reversible. The history of unemployment in the United States—and in Europe—since the 1930s (and especially since the mid-70s) also suggests that the state is quite capable of solving, or managing, unemployment as a political problem while permitting it to persist as a significant social and economic phenomenon. As long as the aggregate unemployment rate does not climb *too* high (just how high is too high is unclear) and as long as a disproportionately large number of the unemployed are African-American, Latino or young, and as long as some of the unemployed receive adequate benefits, the jobless themselves will not constitute a very potent political constituency and their allies will be few. And as long as that remains the case, the government (whether Republican or Democratic) will have little incentive to enact or carry out policies that might reduce unemployment or aid the unemployed—since such policies invariably generate antagonism from influential segments of the business community.

What is to be done? Can the unemployed fight back? If history can serve as a guide, the odds of a protest movement producing any substantial change are slim; but the odds of any substantial change occurring without a militant movement from below are close to zero. The historical record also makes clear that the capacity of radical activists to organize the jobless is limited; at the same time, it strongly implies that without such activists movements of the unemployed will not be built. Franklin Folsom, now 84, closes *Impatient Armies* with the hope that "this book tells people there are better times ahead because there are people who will insist on creating them." Let's hope he's right. □

ART.

ARTHUR C. DANTO

Spoleto Festival U.S.A.

In an important and influential essay published in *Partisan Review* in 1948, Clement Greenberg reported "the crisis of the easel picture." Such pictures, he claimed, are "a unique product of Western culture [with] few counterparts elsewhere"; he drew particular but passing attention to the fact that easel pictures are portable and are meant to hang on walls, and that in consequence they are created in isolation from the particular architectural circumstances of their eventual display. It is through these somewhat external features of such pictures (and, we may remark, their affines: the detached and portable statue, the fine print, the master drawing) that a market in art is possible, in which works are sold and exchanged and collections formed and art museums thinkable. The easel picture makes possible as well the traveling exhibition which forms so central a feature of the art life of recent times. So if *it* is in trouble, pretty much the entire art world, in which temporary display and possession are institutionalized, is in trouble, as is that complex webwork connecting artists, dealers, collectors and curators, not to mention the aesthetic in which the masterpieces of easel painting serve as paradigms of artistic value.

Greenberg was rather less interested in these institutional considerations than in what we might term the internal features of easel pictures. Those, he saw, were undergoing profound changes in consequence of a sustained and collective assault, begun as early as Manet, on the ideal of spatial illusion. It was Greenberg's brilliant perception that every part of the Impressionist canvas shows "the same emphasis of touch," which was a stage in an evolution toward considering paintings as mere flat rectangles in which spatial illusion, the strategies of which had been the glory of Western narrative painting, was being systematically dismantled in favor of all-over patternings of surface. But then, it seems to me, the crisis was one of illusionist painting, and the easel picture was affected only insofar as it participated in the history of illusionism, the major vehicles of which were not easel pictures but frescoes on walls and ceilings, or, when on canvas or panels, then as parts of altarpieces or other ecclesiastical furniture which very often existed in architectural symbiosis with their sites. Caravaggio's *Madonna of the Rosary* was in no sense an easel picture, though it hangs in Vienna's Kunsthistorisches Museum; yet we can infer its intended locus from its internal features. So if the easel picture in truth is in hot water, this cannot be due to an internal evolution in the medium of painting but rather must be a consequence of external attacks, political or at least ideological, on the institutions that are defined by the marketability of these pictures—and that therefore bear connotations only marginally connected with the easel works' representational content, which would, at least in approach, be shared with works typically immovable and fused with their architectural settings. There are plenty of easel paintings that meet the most exacting standards of abstract purity and pictorial flatness. The internal pursuit of these essentially abstract ideals did not threaten the easel picture as a format at all, and in fact, making, buying and displaying easel pictures remains the primary institutional form of artistic life today.

In fact, the crisis of the easel picture was, and remains, a commonplace of political radicalism, and it is my sense that Greenberg appropriated and transformed an attitude toward such pictures that formed part of the political atmosphere he breathed. Alice Neel, for all her radical sympathies an unrepentant easel painter, recalls a studio visit by Philip Rahv—an editor and defining spirit of *Partisan Review*—who told her in 1933, "The easel picture is finished." The easel picture had been consigned to historical irrelevance in 1921 in Moscow by majority vote of artists charged with determining the role of art in the new society: For them, it was inseparably connected with the bourgeois values discredited by the Revolution. "Why paint just one person?" Rahv asked Neel, then as ever a great portraitist, "Siqueiros paints with duco on walls." It would be possible to compose a history of art forms alternative to easel pictures that were construed as correct by the political agendas that invalidated the easel picture. It would begin with the three-dimensional Constructivist works fashioned out of industrial material and include most of the applied art made in Russia in the early twenties, as well as the Mexican murals of the thirties together with some of the Works Progress Administration mural art inspired by them. It would incorporate a lot of min-

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imalist and postminimalist art of the sixties and seventies, and especially the kinds of sculpture and painting endorsed by editors of *October*, in the pages of which the death of painting was enunciated as a historical truth. Taken chronologically, these works would objectify changes in radical political theory, which would have to be spelled out in order for the viewer to understand what the work was intended to mean. What each of the positions would share would be hostility toward the easel picture and, as corollary, a scorn, scathingly expressed, for "the commodification of art." The positions, in turn, would favor some venue other than the commercial art gallery—or the art museum—both of which pivot on the movability and exchangeability of works of art. The factory, the duco-covered wall, the earthwork, are so many critiques of the kinds of works that make commodification possible. This history is not the history of aesthetic experimentation to which Greenberg appealed in his 1948 essay. This instead is the history of ideology realized in artworks that aspire to institutional alternatives.

The most recent addition to this sequence is the site-specific work, which in its conception is hardly separable from the most recent developments in political critique from the left. There really is a crisis in painting today, but it has less to do with any internal unfolding of pictorial difficulties than with the fact that, once again, painting seems to belong to an institutional framework under a renewed form of political criticism, which in turn expresses values and attitudes widespread in the art world today. It is almost as if the easel painter is identified with the gender and race and culture deemed oppressive. So the site-specific work does not exemplify contemporary aesthetics in isolation from contemporary political beliefs. It objectifies the ideologies of the moment.

Now, creating site-specificity is a very old practice, and one which is altogether consistent with illusionist painting. Nothing could be more site-specific than Pozzo's stupendous ceiling painting *The Triumph of Saint Ignatius* in the church of Saint Ignatius in Rome, which cannot easily be thought of as movable, since it makes reference to the interior architecture of the edifice, which seems to continue up into the heavens along with the sky-borne saint. Giotto was site-specific, as was Titian on occasion, or Caravaggio, or Michelangelo, or Bernini, or even Boucher and Fragonard. The Elgin Marbles were specific to the pediments of the Parthenon. As a general rule, site-specific works are not commodified, primarily because they are commissioned, with the final form a matter of negotiation between the artist and whoever controls the site in question. Art that is not site-specific might be termed "free-market art," and it is to this latter genre that easel paintings typically belong (though of course portraits too will commonly have been commissioned). Free-market art has always been commodified—and not simply under capitalism, inasmuch as the practice of collecting art goes back to ancient times. And with collecting came the concept of art as something with investment value and a certain degree of liquidity. The Impressionists, so far as I can think, were never site-specific but always commodified, as were, with some guarded exceptions, the Dutch of the seventeenth century. Chardin's greatest work was free market, and so was most American art: Even the W.P.A. had a category for easel painters (Neel was one). Obviously, power and money can mobilize anything, as witness the cloisters at The Cloisters, the Temple of Dendur at the Metropolitan Museum of Art or Veronese's *Wedding at Cana*, which was trundled in wagons over the Alps by Napoleon's forces, though specific to the site of a refectory in San Giorgio Maggiore in Venice. And let us not forget London Bridge, now a tourist attraction in Arizona.

Old as the practice is, the term "site-specific" is sufficiently recent that I could not find an entry for it in *Artspeak*, a lexicon published in 1990 for those wishing to acquire fluency in current jargon. I believe the expression entered art-world discourse primarily in connection with Richard Serra's controverted *Tilted Arc*, whose alleged site-specificity was tendered as a reason it should not be moved from the somewhat banal locus it endeavored to redeem artistically but which, in the opinion of those required to live with it, was achieved at the cost of making the site useless for any purpose other than aesthetic contemplation of the sculpture. In effect, the work transformed its site into an annex of the museum. Still, the location was construed almost purely in formal and geometrical terms—of curves echoing curves—and questions of history, of meaning and of human needs other than aesthetic appreciation were effectively suppressed in favor of sculptural imperatives.

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It is, by contrast, this widened concept of site as something dense with meaning and eloquent with history that underlies the spectacular assembly of seventeen site-specific works commissioned as its contribution to the visual arts by what has heretofore been mainly a celebration of opera, dance and theater—the Spoleto Festival U.S.A., itself situated in Charleston, South Carolina. Dispersed across that marvelous city, its own architectural magic steeped in history, "Places With a Past" gives a powerful incentive to anyone interested in art to visit that city, where the largest artistic controversies of the present moment are being enacted. And one must do so before August 4, when most of the pieces are scheduled to come down. (When they come down, they really will come down, for it is part of the intention of this show that the works be ephemeral, specific, as it were, to the *temporal* site of the Spoleto Festival.) *Their* site-specificity is clearly not a reason for keeping them where they are forever, though some of them are of sufficient merit that it would enhance the already monumental richness of Charleston to keep them where they are.

The work, according to a festival press release, "reflects the desire of artists to reach audiences in ways that are more direct, unpredictable, and, often, confrontational than can be achieved in gallery or museum." This is not strictly realized, inasmuch as three of the works are sited in Charleston's Gibbes Museum, sometimes, I think, to their detriment. Thus, Chris Burden has placed three full-sized robotic sailing ships—the U, the S and the A—in an upstairs gallery, when these would have looked marvelous on the floor of the U.S. Custom House, whose corners instead are taken up with tiny arrangements of framed petit-point by the Australian artist Narelle Jubelin, the iconographic content of which certainly is Charlestonian but the scale of which is so disproportionate to the immense interior space of the site as to have its power diminished by that. *They* would have been shocking in the museum, where the viewer, peering closely, would have been made uncomfortable by an embroidered slave with a terrifying iron neck-piece, and "Black Ivory" primly woven in, as if by an antebellum maiden. But Jubelin's *broderies* have in common with many of the works that the past with which they seek to confront audiences is not the past of military glamour for which Charleston is famous, nor the rich past of plantations and pale ladies in crinolines or balls in columned mansions, but rather the past of the dispossessed and the disenfranchised. And it is this that connects the site-specific works of Charleston to current ideology.

This philosophy of history is explicit in a work of Ann Hamilton installed in a vacated garage on Pinckney Street and by wide consent one of the successes of the show. Its main component is an immense mound of neatly folded blue shirts and work pants, piled one upon the other—14,000 pounds of proletarian laundry on a large platform. Behind this singular presence is a person, engaged in erasing the pages of blue-bound books, said to be the kinds of texts from which we learn about history as composed of great events and the actions of heroes—events like the firing on Fort Sumter, for example, or Pickett's charge. There is a third component to the work, a sort of rickety upstairs office in which sacks of indigo are suspended, which connects to the work clothes and book covers through color, to Charleston through the fact that indigo was once an important crop, and—who knows?—to the Native American population that once lived on the peninsula through felicitous etymology: "indigo," from the Greek *Indikos*, Indian. The work clothes embody in any case a history very different from the history narrated in standard texts: It is the history of labor, of the lives of countless forgotten men and women led at a level of existence rarely noticed by traditional histories. The symbolic juxtaposition of two kinds of history, one of which is being erased in order to reveal the other, the history that is rarely memorialized or monumentalized, is very dramatic and visually compelling. The connotations of the clothing, the visual immediacy of the mound, the unsettling sight of books being erased, fuse into an image that requires very little by way of auxiliary explanation. It is beyond question "from-the-bottom-up" history that is celebrated throughout the site-specific works installed here: the history of the unhistorical, of laborers, of women, of servants, of African-Americans and especially of slaves. And in consequence there is a heavy strain of moral didacticism in almost all the works. In a sympathetic article on the show for *The New York Times*, Michael Brenson wrote that "almost all the artists came to Charleston to learn from the city, not to tell its citizens what to think." This is true and false. It is true that the artists found the sites through which to make their points in wonderfully unpredictable places. But the points they make are widely made in the art world today, as in the Decade Show in New York last season: points about women, about people of color, about minority culture, about cultural pluralism. And these topics are reflected in the roster of the artists themselves, with women and black artists prominently represented.

Now, didacticism in art is jarring even when one is sympathetic to its imperatives, but it is also true that "didactic" becomes a term of criticism only when the message fails to be transformed by its vehicle. This does not happen in Ann Hamilton's superb piece, which shows what it means to say through sym-

RHÔNE VALLEY, AFTER RAIN

Herons on Lac Léman wait
like English dowagers who've
just learned the Montreux Palace
has burned down again. In the
vineyards are laborers whose
slickers are bright against the
soil, like narcissus at Les
Pléiades. Hectare on hectare
of apricot and pear trees
glow incandescent at their
tips. These orchards were planted
by Rome, unmenaced by the
high scar of lasting snow or
the slurry of runoff past
the dogleg of the Rhône, where
gravity leaned on the plow
of a glacier and then changed
its mind, as if history
were no more than a gust of
wind across a dead lake, the
play of neural waves across
the chill gray flesh of a snail
on a window after rain,
the helplessness of tissue
caught in the harmony of
an idea realized,
not by the creature stalled in
its clear track of slime, but by
the thinker beyond the glass,
an historian it might
be, or visionary, whose
mind pursues the deep fretwork
of its channels, then pauses
and writes, *In fine vicissitude,*
Beauty alternates with Grandeur,
as if Peace had established
herself in the Bosom of Strength.

Karl Kirchwey

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bolic enactment so successful that the viewer feels in the presence of moral truth made real. Symbolic enactment attains an even higher level in the astonishing installation by Antony Gormley, who has taken over a prison house built in 1802 and turned it into a metaphor for the human condition. The floor of one large cell is packed wall to wall with a multitude of clay figures, all alike, whose only manifest feature is a pair of eyeholes as they look upward for release, or meaning, or revelation. Another cell has three immense iron balls, emblemizing, I imagine, the chained weights that impede movement and signify the truth of captivity. In yet another cell, seven suspended male figures, their heads seeming to penetrate the ceiling, convey the meaning perhaps that they are ascending. On opposing sides of a wall that separates two adjoining cells, similar figures (we are told) are encased, as if in paired chrysalises, their mouths and penises connected through tubes. Speech and sex, if the avenues through which we escape from solitude, confer a symbolic meaning on a tube that enters the space of another cell from the ceiling, as if connecting the space of the prison with the space into which the headless men may be rising. There is a final cell, which is flooded, reflecting the patched and peeling walls and the barred window frames. It is a work of immense power.

And so is the work of Liz Magor, who has transformed, with photographs and cannonballs, what was once a home for Confederate widows. It is a cloisterlike space, in the garden of which she has strewn cannonballs as if merely spherical ornaments. (Cannonballs, lethal and maiming, have been ornamentalized throughout Charleston, and piles of them stand alongside clumsy mortars and spiked cannons pointed blindly across the water; in her work, Cindy Sherman shows dismembered legs and hands, as testimony to what cannonballs could wreak when they were virile smashers of body and bone.) Magor has hung photographs of re-enacted scenes of the Civil War, which has become a form of recreational history for those who want vicariously to know what it was like at Bull Run, or Gettysburg or Antietam. Magor spoofs these costly mimes with titles that just fail to match them. At the other end of the house are photographs of couples, the man in military costume, but *this* room is also piled high with cannonballs, the emblems of war invading the parlors, making widows. In a room along the passageway is a photograph in a foolishly sentimental frame of a woman holding what I take to be a real daguerreotype of a dead soldier.

None of these astonishingly moving works, it seems to me, would have been possible had the easel painting not lost its ascendancy, especially in the seventies and eighties, when women artists, especially, turned away from painting and toward modes of expression perceived by them, and especially by the theorists in whom they believed, to be more appropriate to the constraints and powers of their gender. This was a moment when, for example, many of what had been invidiously considered mere crafts were seized upon as vehicles of high art. Ann Hamilton was described to me as a "fiber person" by an artist who is herself a fiber person. Magor's background is in bookworks. Joyce Scott, whose work in Charleston struck me as well intentioned but visually garbled—an assemblage of beads and branches suspended from the tops of some columns which had once belonged to a museum that had burned down—internalizes a boundary between art and craft once regarded as absolute. Whether, in truth, fiberwork, beadwork and bookwork are truly fitter vehicles than easel painting for women's artistic impulses is not something anyone can be said to know. But the ideology that licensed the belief clearly widened and redrew the boundaries of art in a singularly liberating way, opening up opportunities for artists of either gender to work in ways far distant from what the aesthetics of the easel painting stipulated as the essence of art. So the question of whether *these* works were art could scarcely be avoided by the Charlestonians, who divided, according to an informal poll kept by a monitor at one of the sites, sixty to forty, pro and con. Moreover, this alternative aesthetic cannot as yet be altogether separated from its licensing ideology, so in addition to the issue of what is art, the Charlestonians were obliged to deal with substantially more by way of politics than the usual displays in the Gibbes Museum would have trained them for. It was a lot for a single community to handle, especially when the problematics of appreciation were heightened by some polarizing statements by Gian Carlo Menotti, the spiritual head of Spoleto, who disavowed the art vehemently and threatened to leave Charleston and to take his festival with him. Given the economic and cultural role Spoleto plays in

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the life of the city, it was difficult for the citizenry to take a disinterested view. There is in the very air of Charleston something that seems to force the great issues that divide the human soul. It is fitting that the civil wars of late-twentieth-century art should have received their sharpest definition here.

I wish to say only this: Those site-specific works are artistically most compelling that require verbal narrative the least, where the artist has found, like Hamilton and Gormley, Magor and, with partial success, Barbara Steinman (who suspended an ornamental chandelier in a circular old pump house of nearly the same diameter), visual ways to convey the meanings less successful art must achieve with words. Obversely, works of visual art are always to some degree open to conflicting interpretations, so some verbal gloss seems always in order—especially when, as in the world of site-specific art, there is as yet little by way of a common visual language. *House of the Future* was the work of the legendary black artist David Hammons, who chose a site in a black neighborhood rarely touched by the Spoleto festivities. Its chief component is a sort of model of the classic Charleston single house, only comically thin, about as wide as a doorway. It is deliberately underfinished, and on the side facing the street the artist has written a message about the myths that African-Americans have accepted regarding their character. The work is intended to elevate the consciousness of the local youth, to teach them something about architecture, carpentry, themselves. And it may achieve those ends. But friends of mine visited a nearby church and discussed the house with some of the blacks, who were deeply fearful that *their* future was tied to such skinny houses, that maybe they were going to have to live in houses like that, and instead of hope the alien presence of this building in their midst had awakened a sense of powerlessness and trepidation. It is a noble idea to bring art to the people, but the people have to be brought to the art as well: Images alone cannot always communicate what they are intended to mean.

Still, it really is a noble gesture, and I feel that the managers of Spoleto, like the people of Charleston, are greatly in debt to Mary Jane Jacob, one of a new breed of independent curators, who seems single-handedly to have made this extraordinary event actual. □

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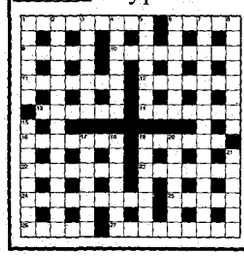

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SOLUTION TO 125TH ANNIVERSARY PUZZLE

		T	H	E	B	I	R	T	H	O	F	A		
	C		O		R		E		A		E		T	
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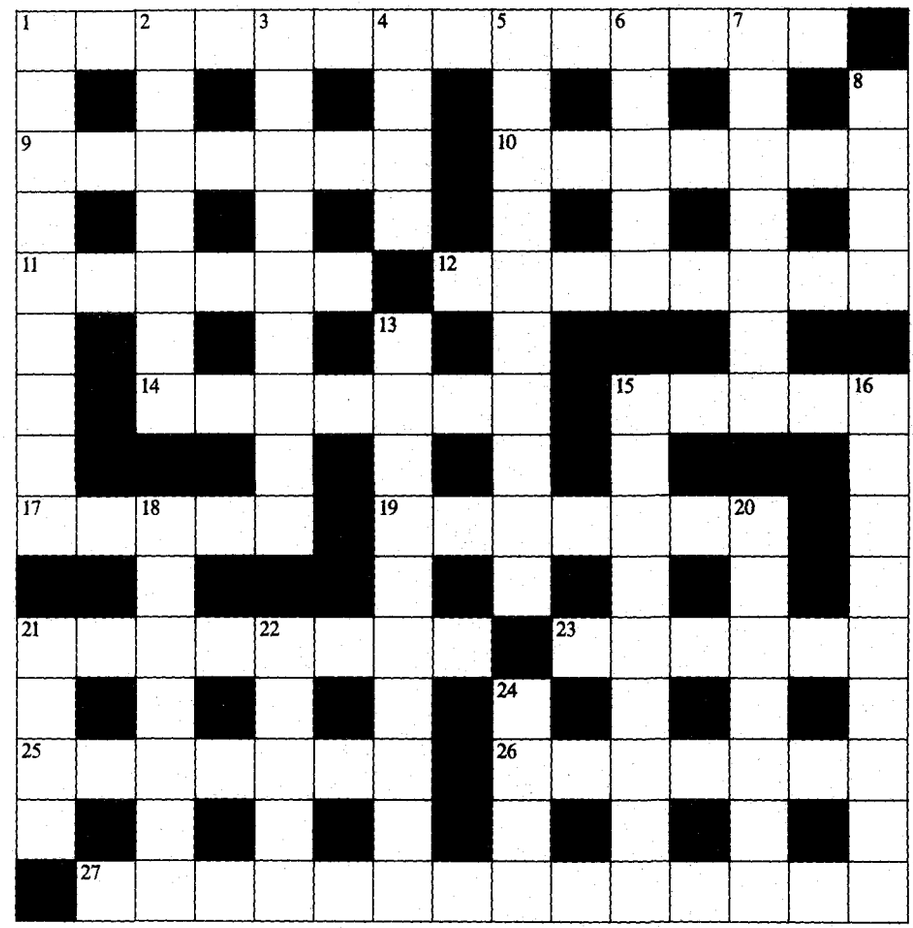
Crossword Puzzle No. 2345

FRANK W. LEWIS



ACROSS

1 After WWII broke out, they said it does for appeasement, where protection from a downfall is kept. (8,6)
9 They might be in the garden Dali has created. (7)
10 Perhaps where the lady who rode a 17 came from. (7)
11 Powder and shot used to have to be in the gun. (6)
12 On the track? No, the other way around, unless in a couchette. (8)
14 Could it be listed as "formic" or is it just a counteragent? (7)
15 B and the rest of the letters should be like spaghetti. (5)
17 One eventually surrounded the lady who came from 10. (7)
19 Plunked down through the years by lovers especially during the '20s? (7)
21 Feral acts involving animals? (8)
23 Possibly pet food for animals in China? (6)
25 Set fire to him when carrying uranium or some other silver-white element. (7)
26 Give out with a couple of common greetings when the taxi comes back in, and put some fire into it! (7)
27 The poet's narcissus is just a passing fancy either way you look at it, to possess a real humdinger of it! (14)

SEE LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION AT LEFT

DOWN

1 The sole location where one complains about finding things in a crowded household? (9)
2 Where such as Mimi's friends come from? (7)
3 A great film to come in with where the earthquake started! (9)
4 and 24 No performance after it today, but does it reveal what cobblers should stick to? And how! (4,4)
5 Got to first base, but ended up not safe, as was specifically mentioned. (7,3)
6 You might have a point here, but it's a sort of one who backs 24. (5)
7 French 12—or are they your lookout? (7)
8 See 21 down
13 Served exceptionally well, which is about the ordinary procedure getting used to something. (10)
15 How some of those ticky-tacky houses were made? (9)
16 My, I get confused with Cleopatra's boyfriend! No one will know if you have it! (9)
18 A perfect model of something brought to life at a fancy do, around four o'clock! (7)
20 The laic sort is quite proper to most people! (7)
21 and 8 As to this, perhaps, it could be sown during the green season. (4,4)
22 To this, hail is something we expect quite often in Washington. (5)
24 See 4

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